Language Learning and Integration of Adult Bhutanese Refugees: An Ethnographic Study

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Declaration of Originality

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Published Work

The author acknowledges that the following papers derive from this thesis. The major portion of chapter 2 of this thesis was published in a book chapter of:

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Signature:

Subhash Koirala

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Statement of Ethical Conduct

The research associated with this thesis abides by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and the rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University. The Tasmania Social Sciences HREC Ethics Committee granted Full Committee Ethics Application Approval (H0013905) to this project on 26 April 2014.

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Abstract

This study sought a holistic and in-depth investigation of English language learning and integration experiences of a group of adult Bhutanese refugees in Australia. The Bhutanese refugees have settled since 2007 as new residents of their host country after two decades of expatriate life in the refugee camps of Nepal. The impetus for this exploratory study stemmed from my personal experience as a cultural orientation trainer to such refugees and awareness of their expectations, attitudes, and dispositions related to learning and life trajectory.

This study is interdisciplinary in its approach that takes account of the complex interplay of language learning and integration. Using an ethnographic methodology as an approach to investigation, this study sought to examine three social spaces of refugees: the family and ethnic community, the host society and the migrant English classroom. The attention was focussed on the resources and constraints the refugees encountered in each of the social spaces. Moreover, various social, contextual, cultural factors, and pre-migration influences embedded in these spaces were explored for their impact on learning and integration.

This study was important mainly for three reasons. Through critical examination of the role of refugees' family and ethnic community networks, it aimed to provide insights into to what extent the resources embedded in these networks can be significant to refugees and also contribute to the existing literature of social capital (Putnam, 2000). Drawing on the investigation of how cultural issues, pre-migration experiences and perceptions of teaching impact on classroom language learning, this study sought to offer insights into how the English language should be taught to the adult students from refugee backgrounds. Moreover, this study sought to extend the scope of the existing refugee integration literature by investigating the integration as a process of ongoing negotiation between ethnocultural

retention and host society participation, and how various social, cultural, contextual factors, and pre-migration experiences influenced the way integration is structured in everyday practice.

This study employed an ethnographic approach as a methodological framework, involving observations, interviews, and a reflective journal study as the main tools for data collection. The field work was carried out in a regional area of the State of Tasmania. The observations were conducted in the migrant English classrooms, in a multi-ethnic Australian church and in the refugee community; and then the retrospective interviews were carried out with the Bhutanese refugees, their teachers and other service providers. The data were analyzed using ethnographic macro and micro level analysis techniques (Duff, 2002). The findings generated from observation data were supported and triangulated, where possible, by the use of data derived from interviews. This study was informed mainly by the interpretive paradigm. Given how extensive and messy the literature on migrant language learning and integration is, this study utilized a wide range of relevant theories to analyze and interpret the findings derived from the ethnographic fieldwork.

One important contribution of this study is the finding that the social capital derived from refugees' family and ethnic community networks not only enables, but it also inhibits integration. This bonding social capital can function as a coping resource for refugees against the effects of culture shock, language shock, and racism, and can facilitate access to a range of instrumental support and information necessary for successful transition to the host society. However, this study also suggests that an extreme level of embeddedness within the cultural and social frames of ethnic space has the potential to jeopardize individual mobility, host society language learning and sustainable integration.

This study shows that the cultural dispositions the adult refugee students bring to the classroom provide the primary basis for the way they approach their English learning, and

thus influence their agency and identity as learners. The findings also suggest that the students are likely to engage in the desired learning tasks if their perceptions of teaching quality cohere with the actual teaching they are exposed to. Teachers are therefore suggested to adopt a hybridity of teaching approaches and methods in ways that bridge the gap between their own and their students' perceptions and expectations. The implications drawn from the empirical results additionally suggest that if the aim of the migrant English program is to facilitate the integration of refugees into their multicultural society, then the pedagogy it embodied should incorporate a hybridity of simulation scenarios (native, non-native and co-ethnic), enabling them to critically examine the impact of different types of identity they portray and negotiate their identities according to social constraints.

This study suggests that in order to understand refugee integration more fully, it is not sufficient to account only for the pre-determined set of objective measures (such as employment and educational outcomes) without considering the way in which integration is actualized in everyday experience. For refugees in this study, what it means to be integrated into the Australian society was complex, ambivalent and context dependent. It was an ongoing process of contestation and negotiation between different values, identities and practices embedded in ethnic and mainstream Australia community. Based on my empirical study, I suggest that the everyday practices of refugee integration resembles with Bhabha's (1990) notion of "Third Space" and incorporates the hybridity of cultural identifications and experiences.

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List of Abbreviations

The following table provides a list of abbreviations and acronyms used throughout the thesis

Abbreviation	Meaning
AMEP	Adult Migration English Program
TasTAFE	Tasmania Technical and Further Education
IOM	International Organization for Migration
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
L1	Native Language
L2	Second Language
DIBP	Department of Immigration and Border Protection
MRC	Migrant Resource Centre
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
CSWE	Certification of Spoken and Written English
CO	Cultural Orientation

Part A: Introduction, Literature Review and Methodology

Chapter 1

Introduction

This introductory chapter begins with my professional experience of working with Bhutanese refugees in Nepal in assisting them in their resettlement process to their potential host countries. It was this experience that inspired me to choose this topic for my research. After a brief description of Bhutanese refugees based on my experience, I will provide a broader overview of their historical, social and cultural background based on the available literature. Then, in the final section of this chapter, I will outline the context for the study, state the aims and research questions, and discuss the significance and limitation of the study. The following section is my story about how I became interested in the topic of Bhutanese refugees.

1.1 Personal Introduction

One cold and windy winter day, when I was very young, my father took me to a place I had never visited before. I saw hundreds of colourful huts, often under one metre apart, with plastic roofs. My father told me that those were Bhutanese refugee camps. I saw some young children reading books in an open ground outside. My father continued saying, “It’s their schools”. I wondered why these children, unlike me, could not go to ordinary schools.

After several years, I got an opportunity to learn about Bhutanese refugees when I started working as a Cultural Orientation (CO) Trainer in the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Nepal. IOM is a humanitarian international organization working with the movement of refugees to third countries offering permanent resettlement opportunities. As a CO trainer, I was responsible for developing curriculum and conducting cultural orientation sessions for Bhutanese refugees bound for resettlement to the United States of America (USA), Australia and other destination countries. Sessions were carried out in a classroom setting; a Western teaching methodology was used. All Bhutanese refugees resettling to the

USA, Canada or Australia, who were above the age of 15, were invited to attend a 5 day CO session (25 hours in total). In CO, refugees learned factual information about their new country, developed new skills needed to succeed, and explored the attitudes necessary for a successful first few months in their new home. These refugees were ethnic Nepali; we all shared a common culture and language.

Bhutanese refugees, especially those who are in their 30s and above, would say that they had not had the opportunity to participate in formal education in Bhutan and in Nepal. Coming to CO classrooms had been the first exposure to a formal classroom setting for many Bhutanese refugee adults. They would say they could not do anything or learn anything new; they even did not want to try. According to them, a person around 50 was already old. Their prevailing view was that they were too old to learn and that they did not need to worry about anything in the new country as their children would take care of them. Many were happy to sit passively in CO classrooms while younger, more educated participants, took the lead. They would say, "Classes are for our small children. Why eat cucumber on the day of dying?" Meaning, "why bother to settle to a new country and learn new things when you are old?" The challenge during CO was to empower them to feel that they are capable individuals, and that they might have faced educational as well as other barriers in their life that limited their opportunities, but they can learn.

Many Bhutanese seniors had negative attitudes towards learning English as well. They had a stereotype that "English is a language of White people, not ours". In one of my CO classes, a young daughter and her mother had argued about English language learning this way:

> The daughter said, "We will become American citizen in five years and we will have to speak in English. Our grandchildren will be born in America and their mother tongue will be English".

> Her mother replied, "My great grandfather who left Nepal for Bhutan spoke in Nepali and I still do. We chose to retain our Nepali language and identity and thus left Bhutan because we couldn't do so there. I am going to do my best to retain my ancestors' culture and language in America too".

After living in a camp-based setting with assistance from a number of different organizations for nearly 20 years, many Bhutanese refugees were interested to know how they would continue to be supported in the country of resettlement. Breaking the cycle of passivity and dependency to foster an attitude that "I am my first resource" and that "I should be self-sufficient in every aspect of life in a new country" was very challenging in CO classes. These passive and dependency attitudes were reflected by their reluctance to learn new things. As an example, when I simply asked everyone to come in front of class and grab their pens and papers by themselves to make them proactive in their learning, they were reluctant even to come in front and would tend to ask their children or friends to retrieve their learning instruments.

Despite the fact that I shared the same cultural and linguistic backgrounds with my participants, my beliefs about teaching and learning did not usually match up with what my participants believed. During my employment in IOM, I was trained to teach in an engaging and communicative way. But my participants were accustomed to the traditional style of teaching – where the teacher teaches and does everything for the students. They would say, "You are the source of knowledge. We are here to listen from you". I wanted my participants to discuss things and learn from each other. They believed, though, that they did not know anything, so what was there to discuss? They thought I, the teacher, was the expert and they wanted me to just tell them.

In one of the English language pilot classes in the camp for Bhutanese refugees, I was working as a Teaching Assistant, and we had a native English teacher. The teacher wanted to

give her students lots of opportunities to practice speaking by putting them into pairs or groups and giving them something to talk about. The students did not like it, however. They said, "We don't want to talk to each other. None of us speaks good English; we'll only learn each other's mistakes. We want to hear you talk; you're the only one here who speaks correctly".

The relationships between the individual, family and society are very strong and complex in Bhutanese culture. It is usual that the senior member of a family will make decisions for all members of the family, and there will not usually be any discussion about it. These cultural values were often transferred to CO classes. In a mixed-classroom setting, it would be the smart people or head of the family that would talk a lot and dominate others. The majority of my students did not want to speak up for themselves. They did not want to ask questions; they had their leaders to ask or speak on their behalf. They were reluctant to say "No" or "I didn't understand". In almost every class, I had some participants who were totally dominant on others, as they thought they knew everything. However, the majority of my participants were illiterate adults who had never been to school, and they would feel inferior. As a result, CO had little impact on those who did not already know – the neediest seemed to benefit the least. The passive and illiterate people would tend to rely on more educated people or leaders of their community in every aspect of their life. To illustrate it more, let me give an example. In one particular class, I was teaching about how to travel in a plane. I was discussing that they need to ask for help when needed during their journey to Australia. One middle-age woman around 40 commented suddenly, "I do not know anything and if I get stuck in the toilet during my flight, it is the job of my group leader to take me out or even to order food for me".

There is a saying in Bhutanese culture, "Sheep join the sheep association and goats join the goat association". Bhutanese refugees had very strong relationships with people of

their own community, despite having some discrimination in terms of caste or ethnicity. Many Bhutanese refugees would tend to say in CO class, "I don't want to live with the African or Caucasian people in the new country. My neighbours should be Bhutanese. Otherwise, I will not go to the USA or Australia". Such attitudes may not be conducive once resettled in Australia for interacting with Australians and practicing English. They also held a common stereotype that "all Africans are bad people and all Caucasians are saints". Their fears towards the African ethnic group increased because they heard that their relatives in the resettled countries had been assaulted by African people, and many of them were afraid that might happen to them as well. The majority of parents in CO classes would tend to say, "It is okay for our kids to marry who they want, but not an African-American". It is assumed that such attitudes may impact negatively for classroom interactions in mixed English language classes in Australia and their integration into the Australian community. The other stereotype that they held was "English is the language of Caucasian people". So when they had Caucasian people as a visitor or a teacher in CO classes, they would tend to feel dominated and shy to talk even if they had knowledge of English. One day, I invited a Caucasian Canadian teacher to one of my classes. My participants said that they all forgot how to shake hands and all other lessons that they had already been taught. They remarked that they were very nervous about meeting a real "Gora" (Caucasian). One woman commented, "The mouth was supposed to speak in English but our heart is thinking in Nepali".

Households in the Bhutanese community are generally headed by male members with male members having a greater say. When it comes to speaking outside the household or in public, both males and females would tend to regard the male members as the leaders or spokespersons. This cultural background was also transferred to CO classes. In a mixed classroom setting, the male participants were the ones usually doing all the talking. The female participants did not take part in discussions or they would just say, "Yeah, yeah, same

thing". They did not voice their opinion freely or say what they wanted to in the presence of male participants. Another interesting point, which clashes with Australian expectations, was both sexes, but especially the women, would tend to say that they would feel freer to express their thoughts when the other sex (and their spouse) was not present in the class.

My experience as a bicultural trainer to Bhutanese refugees for more than five years and my familiarity with their expectations, perceptions, and cultural issues prompted me to question what will happen to these refugees when they emigrate to Australia, and how they will approach their integration into the new linguistic and cultural environment. Therefore, I chose Bhutanese refugees as the research subjects for this study.

1.2 A Brief Overview of Bhutanese Refugees

This section briefly presents an overview of the Bhutanese refugee crisis as well as a general background of their historical, political, social, cultural and educational contexts. It begins with a short description of Bhutan and the underlying roots of Bhutanese refugee problems.

1.2.1 From displacement to resettlement

The Bhutanese refugees are the descendants of Nepali migrants that settled in southern Bhutan in search of farmland after the Anglo-Bhutanese war of 1865 (Hutt, 2005, p. 45). Their numbers accelerated over the following decades due to subsequent migration from Nepal. Successive generations of those Nepali migrants flourished, gradually. They began to play an increasingly important role in national politics, economy, and development. Some of them became high-ranking Government officials and educators. In 1958, the Government passed its first Citizenship Act, and the Bhutanese citizenship was granted to all Nepali-speaking immigrants (Hutt, 1996).

Bhutan is a small Himalayan country situated to the east of Nepal and between India and China. The Nepali-speaking Bhutanese, also known as the *Lhotshampas,* were one of the

four ethnic groups living in the southern part of Bhutan during the 20th century. The other three ethnic groups include the Ngalong in the west, the central Bhutanese, and the Sharchop in the east (Hutt, 2005, p. 44). The minority Nepali Bhutanese, who were mostly Hindus, remained distinct from the other mainstream Bhutanese in terms of language, culture, and religion. The adoption of ethnic integration policy had allowed the Nepali Bhutanese to maintain their distinct religion, culture, language, and customs.

However, a tension arose in the small peaceful country when the Government executed an ethnic-cleansing policy towards Nepali Bhutanese in the mid-to-late 1980s. The amendment to the Citizenship Act in 1985 marginalized the citizenship rights of many Nepali Bhutanese (Hutt, 1996). A census conducted in Southern Bhutan in 1988 categorized more than 100,000 Nepali Bhutanese as illegal immigrants. In 1989, the King of Bhutan declared a controversial assimilation policy called "One Bhutan, One People". The new assimilation policy forced the Hindu Bhutanese to lose their culture and identity and assimilate into the dominant Buddhist culture. The use of Nepali language in schools was banned. When the Nepali Bhutanese rebelled against the discriminatory policy for their civil rights, the Government suppressed demonstrations. Several activists were arrested and tortured. Many lost their property; their schools were destroyed. By 1993, tens of thousands of Nepali Bhutanese fled to Nepal, crossing the border of India (Cultural Orientation Resource [COR] Center, 2007).

After the Nepali Bhutanese arrived in Nepal fleeing their home country in a mass exodus, they were confined to live in isolated refugee camps for over two decades. Legally, they were not permitted to travel outside of the refugee camps without seeking permission from the Government of Nepal. Many of their basic human rights – including the right to employment – were violated. As a result, refugees experienced a devaluation of their abilities and social roles (IOM, 2011, p. 4).

According to Human Rights Watch [HRW] (2007), changes in their political and economic circumstances led these refugees to a situation of complete dependency on the support of international humanitarian organizations for every aspect of life and induced feelings of powerlessness and helplessness. Their original communities broke down since they had left their families and friends behind; and the socioeconomic status and ethno-cultural identities had been greatly affected. It produced frustrations and increased their stress level (IOM, 2011, p. 4). Although several rounds of talks had been held between the governments of Nepal and Bhutan to resolve the issue permanently, the government of Nepal neither allowed the refugees to integrate into the local Nepali community nor would the Bhutan government permit them to return to their home country (Banki, 2008, p. 3).

In the late 2007, the third-country resettlement was offered as a durable solution for the Bhutanese refugees since the other two options – repatriation and local integration – were not foreseeable. However, the refugees initially had conflicting opinions about moving permanently to a new country. Some opposed resettlement at the fundamental level, as they thought it would spoil all their efforts and dreams of returning back to Bhutan. The clash between pro-and anti-resettlement groups polarized the Bhutanese community. In consequence, it created fear and anxiety, with threats of violence, for those who wanted to sign up for resettlement (Banki, 2008, pp. 6-7).

Some refugees looked at resettlement as another form of labour migration in which young employable members of a family would go to a foreign country to earn money to send back to support the rest of the family. Some Bhutanese households, therefore, decided to split families and to send educated youths for resettlement. As a result, the more educated refugees were the ones to resettle first; and the elderly as well as vulnerable refugees such as people with hearing, vision, learning impairments were left behind. The UNHCR (2011a) statistics revealed that 74 percent of refugees who had post-graduate diplomas had signed up for

resettlement within the first seven months. Negative rumours passed around the camps (such as "refugees are sold to resettlement countries", "elderly people and children are not accepted for resettlement") also became demotivating factors for vulnerable refugees to register their interest (Banki, 2008, p. 7). In general, the refugees who had educational privileges seemed to be well-prepared for resettlement, whereas the illiterate and marginalized refuges were less confident and had more anxiety about moving to an even more foreign environment.

When Bhutanese refugee arrivals gradually increased in the destination countries, many elderly and adult refugees in the camps felt pressured into resettlement. According to IOM (2011), more than half of the respondents above the age of 40 in a small survey remarked that their decisions to move were made because someone else in their families wanted to go for resettlement (p. 16). Since all members of a family had to make a collective decision and none of the family members would be left behind including elderly and vulnerable individuals, the resettlement process created family disputes between the ones who wanted to resettle and the ones what wanted to stay in the refugee camp. IOM (2011) further explains that family conflicts and devaluation of traditional family support systems directly impacted on the mental wellbeing of refugees (p. 5).

Moreover, UNHCR (2011a) points out that a large number of the refugee adult population made decisions to apply for resettlement with the hope that moving to a third country would give their children better opportunities for education and employment (p. 7). One of the participants in UNHCR's study remarked that although she did not have any hope for her own future, she decided to move to the US compromising her present life because she thought her children would have a better future there (p. 6). It clearly reveals that the majority of Bhutanese refugee adults did not view resettlement as a better solution for themselves, but for their children's future.

Starting from 2007, about 100,000 Bhutanese refugees of the original 108,000 have been relocated to eight resettlement countries as of November 2015 (UNHCR, 2015). Among the resettlement countries, the USA has received the largest number of Bhutanese, followed by Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The UNHCR report shows that more than 5,000 Bhutanese have been settled across different states and territories of Australia as part of this humanitarian resettlement programme.

1.2.2 Gender, culture and education

Studies suggest that the traditional Nepali Bhutanese culture favours male domination and power (COR Center, 2007; HRW, 2003). Bhutanese cultural practices are highly influenced by the Hindu religion. Gender roles are generally prescribed; for example, women are responsible for household work, and men have more authority in decision making for the family (COR Center, 2007). In Bhutan, girls were discriminated against since the day they were born (HRW, 2003). They were considered as burdens to the family. Sons were more valuable, as they were expected to care for parents in their old age. The traditional role of a married Bhutanese woman is to give birth to a child, regulate sexual behaviour, take care of children, and do household chores. Polygamy was legal. If a husband took a second wife, the first wife would have an inferior status in the household. These cultural practices hindered women from being economically and socially self-sufficient.

Even after they fled to Nepal, many women had become victims of gender-based violence, rape, child marriage, and discrimination. The government of Nepal denied registering children as Bhutanese refugees who had a refugee mother but a non-refugee father. For example, in the report by HRW (2003), a rape victim commented that she could not register her child in refugee camp because she could not name the father during registration (pp. 26-29). Gender discrimination was also reflected in schools. UNHCR (2001)

reported that male teachers were significantly outnumbered in refugee camp schools, and schools would tend to favour boys in a number of different ways; for example, giving them more opportunities in leadership roles. Consequently, it would have been mostly boys that won prizes in exams or other extra-curricular activities (p. 145).

Although education is highly valued in Bhutanese society, the majority of refugees did not get the opportunity to attend schools when they were in Bhutan due to a number of different reasons. Some lived in very remote areas with no facilities of schools, while others did not have time to study as they had to engage in household work. In addition, there were some refugees in the camps who did not take advantage of camp schools. One reason was that they did not see the value of education in their future life (Marschilok, 2013). According to Banki (2008), only 13 percent of refugees had an education past Grade 10 and only about 35 percent of camp population had survival English language proficiency (p. 4).

Due to illiteracy, adult refugees also lacked confidence to speak out in public contexts and make personal decisions about their lives. For example, one of the participants in Marschilok's (2013) study said that she would feel shy to speak in front of her friends as she did not know if what she was saying was right or wrong. When the researcher asked her to name some significant events in her life, she replied that she could not answer because she was illiterate.

Culture and religion are strongly interwoven in the everyday life of Bhutanese refugees. These beliefs are manifested in the processes of teaching and learning. In traditional Hindu education, teachers were regarded as religious leaders (often called *Guru*) and schools as temples (UNHCR, 2001, p. 134). The role of Guru was to transfer knowledge to their students, and over the years it would be transferred to the next generation. It favours traditional hierarchical teacher-student relationships and lecture method of instruction. The Hindu philosophy of education has also influenced the teaching learning process of refugee

camp schools. According to UNHCR (2001, p. 134), students in the camp schools would tend to be passive listeners. They would mostly listen to their teachers, without asking questions. The author in their report also remarked about a poster that they had observed in a classroom which said "A good student is one who talks less in class" (p. 134).

Very little is known about the resettlement experiences of these new waves of Bhutanese refugees in their host countries. In a study about resettled Bhutanese in Norway conducted by Gharti (2011), it was found that although their identity had changed after a few years living in Norway and they already had considerable exposure to Norwegian culture, the majority of Bhutanese considered themselves as Bhutanese refugees with Nepali origin. They believed that they were similar to the Nepalese in language, culture, religion and tradition, no matter how long they had lived in Norway (Gharti, 2011, p. 93). Ghatri further emphasized that Bhutanese refugees were very dedicated to preserving their cultural identity. Many parents even did not want their children to mix so much with the new culture and with people of other ethnic groups because they thought that their cultural identity would be lost and their children would become foreigners (p. 91).

According to Chase (2011), the majority of resettled Bhutanese refugees in the US believes that their adjustment to a new country is easier compared to other refugees from other countries because they have at least one member in their families who can speak English (p. 55). It shows that an individual's education is his family's property in Bhutanese culture. This belief contradicts with "social ecological literature" which views education solely within an individual sphere" (Kohrt et al., as cited in Chase, 2011, p. 55). In Bhutanese society, having someone educated in a family is directly linked to successful resettlement of the entire family as the educated individual is responsible for coordinating bureaucratic procedures of all family members related to resettlement. It implies that not having an

educated individual in a family means difficulty in adjustment of entire family members (pp. 55 – 56).

Chase (2011) observes that traditional gender roles in Bhutanese community are obvious in day-to-day life even after their resettlement to the US. For example, they prefer to place men as speakers of the entire family to deal with the larger community and people from other ethnic groups. During the data collection process (Chase, 2011), women alone were reluctant to be interviewed by a foreign male; they wanted the researcher to interview the family together (pp. 55 – 62).

1.3 Framing the Study

Given the growing population of Bhutanese refugees in the major host countries in recent years, understanding how these refugees navigate the process of integration into a culturally and linguistically different society has been a critical area of research. To date, very little research has been done to explore the integration experiences of these new waves of refugees. Most of this research have focussed on their mental health issues and their initial transition experiences (Chase, 2011; Gharti, 2011; UNHCR, 2011). However, I have found no research that explores a broad range of factors that influence the settlement and integration outcomes of Bhutanese refugees. Although the Bhutanese refugees have been one of the five core groups of refugees resettling in Australia in the last few years under the Humanitarian Program (DIBP, 2013a, p. 6), very little is known about their post-migration experiences. Given this circumstance, this study seeks to bridge this gap through an exploratory and in-depth investigation of the language learning and integration process of these refugees who have immigrated to Australia.

Integration has been identified as a central concept in the refugee settlement process (Ager & Strang, 2008; Australian Survey Research Group, 2011; European Commission, 2010; McPherson, 2010; Valtonen, 2004). Increasing attention has been paid in academic and

policy discourses to the successful integration of refugees in the society within which they settle. Much of the current literature has viewed integration as a product-based construct, and emphasis has thus been focussed on objective measures of integration, such as health and employment outcomes (Australian Survey Research Group, 2011; Coussey, 2000; European Commission, 2010; UNHCR, 2002). Many studies employing a product-based approach have identified a range of functional indicators that refugees need to attain in order to be fully integrated into their host society (e.g. Coussey, 2000, UNHCR, 2002). These researchers tend to regard integration as a prescriptive framework and conceive it as a one-way adaptation by which refugees assimilate into the host society. In contrast, very little research has attempted to investigate integration as a process of intercultural interaction between the members of the host country and the groups of refugees or how various social, cultural, situational factors and pre-migration experiences influence refugee integration process in a specific sociocultural context. Thus, this study attempts to address this gap in the existing literature.

As I demonstrate in this study, the ability to speak the host-society language is central to the refugee integration process (Ager & Strang, 2008; Carrington, McIntosh, & Walmsley, 2007; Colic-Peisker, 2002; Colic-Peisker, 2009; Leith, 2012; Watkins, Razee, & Richters, 2012). In recognizing the significance of host society language learning, the Australian Government's settlement program offers 510 hours of free English as a second language courses through the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) to all refugees and eligible migrants to help them acquire a basic functional level of English. Refugees need a certain degree of language proficiency in order to be able to interact with members of their host society and thereby participate in the larger social networks. Given this interconnectedness, this study also attempts to investigate the refugee integration process from a language learning perspective, which makes a significant contribution to the field of refugee language

learning. In this respect, this study can be considered as a holistic study that explores the complex interplay of language learning, social participation, and integration.

Recent studies taking a process-oriented approach have shown that language learning for immigrants and refugees is a complex social process and is deeply embedded in the social, cultural, institutional, political, and historical contexts in which they find themselves (Duff, 2007; Gordon, 2004; Norton, 2013; Norton Pierce, 1995). Other studies have similarly highlighted the influence of these contexts on other aspects of refugee integration (Dhanji, 2009; Lewis, 2010; Valtonen, 2004). However, I have found no studies that have examined these issues collectively. Moreover, most of the previous studies have focussed exclusively either on the formal classroom space (Skilton-Sylvester, 2002) or on refugees' ethnic community (Chiswick & Miller, 2002; Lamba & Krahn, 2003) or on the wider English-speaking society (Norton, 2013). Given that all these social spaces constitute the primary sites where the processes of language learning and sociocultural integration may be facilitated or inhibited, this study investigates the two processes simultaneously and synchronously across the settings of home, classroom, community, and larger society.

1.3.1 Research aims and questions

This study is open, holistic, and exploratory in nature. It aims to provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the process of language learning and integration of the adult Bhutanese refugees in Australia. Using the ethnographic approach (mainly participant observations and interviews), it investigates a broad range of factors impacting on their successful language learning, initial settlement, and sustainable integration, with particular focus on their family and ethnic community networks, cultural norms and traditions, pre-migration influences, and host societal and institutional contexts.

Given the exploratory nature of this study, the original research questions were revised slightly as the study progressed in order to incorporate the issues identified by the

initial exploration. The revised research questions were used as a guideline for the subsequent data collection and analysis. For instance, one key issue identified during the initial observation in the AMEP classroom was the strong embeddedness of Bhutanese students in their ethnic networks. Therefore, a research question was formulated to expand the exploration of the effects of these networks on their language learning and other aspects of settlement outcomes. Refining research questions in this way in the early part of a study is a normal process of an ethnographic study (Creswell, 2012; LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). This revision also provided me the flexibility to incorporate and investigate what appeared to be of most interest and most readily researched. The main research questions of this study are the following:

- How do the family and ethnic social networks that Bhutanese refugees have access to influence their migration, language learning and integration outcomes? To what extent are the resources embedded in these networks significant to refugees?
- To what extent do the host societal context and social networks play a role in their English language learning in natural context?
- To what extent do their culture, pre-migration experiences and their perceptions of teaching influence the way they approach their learning in the AMEP class? How can the teacher support their learning in an effective way?
- What is integration for these refugees?

These research questions are attempted to be answered mainly in the analysis part of this study. The last four chapters of the analysis, from chapter 10 to chapter 13, are specifically devoted to answer the four research questions, respectively. In addition, the answer to the second part of the third research question that is concerned with the best

practices for teaching English to adult refugee students is discussed more explicitly in the final section of the conclusion of this thesis.

1.3.2 Significance of the study

Most of the work in the field of refugee integration has been theoretical (Berry, 1997; Phinney, 1996) and prescriptive in nature (Ager & Strang, 2008; Australian Survey Research Group, 2011). Therefore, there is a need for the use of a bottom-up approach in order to take account of the everyday integration experiences of refugees or how their integration process is influenced by various social, cultural, ethnic, institutional, and pre-migration contexts in which they are situated. Moreover, as Phillimore (2011) points out, not much focus has been placed on explaining the interrelationship between the different domains of integration or how one aspect of integration such as language socialization is linked to, and influenced by, other aspects such as social networking and cultural integration. Therefore, through an in-depth and holistic investigation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) of the interplay of language learning and integration process, this study is expected to extend the scope of the existing refugee research.

Given the unique historical, social, cultural, and political backgrounds that the refugees bring from their countries of origin (Richmond, 1993), it is crucial for teachers to understand how these backgrounds influence the ways in which the refugee students approach their learning of English within the AMEP. The pedagogical implications drawn from the findings of the study offer insights into how the English language should be taught to these students in a more effective way, which can be beneficial for teachers to improve their teaching practices.

The study of the role of the family and ethnic community in the integration process of refugees can be beneficial for refugee service providers to understand the resources refugees can obtain from their social networks and the resources they may require from their service

providers. The study of refugees' social networks in the host societal context can also make an important contribution to the existing literature of social capital (Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000). The findings of the investigation of the factors influencing the integration process may also be useful for the service providers to understand the potential adjustment challenges faced by the refugees in Australia.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

Following the general guidelines of ethnographic research design (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007), a non-traditional approach was used in structuring this thesis. This thesis is organized in four main parts.

Part A – Introduction, Literature Review and Methodology

Part A comprises three chapters. Chapter 1, the *introduction*, presents the personal motivation for this study, outlines a brief socio-cultural background of Bhutanese refugees, and sets the context for the study. This chapter also introduces the research questions and discusses the underlying statements of the problem that led to this study.

Chapter 2, the *literature review*, presents a brief overview of literature concerning refugees, their integration, Australian immigration policy and everyday multicultural practices and experiences. The major component of literature review, including the review of various theoretical approaches to language learning and integration, is embedded in the analysis part of the thesis.

Chapter 3, the *methodology*, explains why and how ethnography was used as the methodological approach in this study. This chapter also outlines the details of the procedure used in site selection, data collection and data analysis.

Part B – Ethnographic Stories

Part B, the *ethnographic stories*, comprises five chapters. This part introduces the participants and explores their lived experiences, with particular attention to various contexts

(such as classroom, workplace, ethnic community and church) that shape their language learning and integration. The five chapters, from chapter 4 to chapter 8, are dedicated to the ethnographic descriptions of their lived experiences across five different contexts: the beginner's AMEP class, the intermediate AMEP class and church, home, and workplace socialization. The ethnographic descriptions draw largely on field observation data, supplemented where relevant by information from participants' interviews.

Part C – Analysis and Discussion

Part C, the *analysis and discussion*, comprises five chapters. In part C, data are synthesized and interpreted using a range of relevant theories from the fields of second language acquisition and refugee integration. The ethnographic descriptions are triangulated where possible by comparing information from different data sources. Part C also presents a number of new insights into the topics of investigation (i.e. language learning and integration) by examining the empirical data through multiple theoretical lenses that include feminist, immigration, race, social capital and cultural perspectives.

The five chapters in this part, from chapter 9 to chapter 13, are respectively dedicated to the analysis of the five main themes that emerged from the empirical data: the role of social networks in refugee migration, the effects of family and ethnic networks on language learning and integration, language learning in the host community context, classroom language learning, and the meaning of refugee integration. Each chapter provides a detailed discussion of the core concepts in the chapter by drawing on the relevant literature, ethnographic stories from part B and direct quotations from participants' interviews.

Part D – Conclusions and Implications

The final chapter of the thesis (chapter 14) attempts a synthesis of the key findings of the study, presents the contributions to new knowledge and discusses their implications for language teaching and integration of refugees in the Australian context.

Chapter 2

A Brief Introduction to the Literature

2.1 Literature in Context

An ethnographic study does not usually begin with a well-defined theoretical framework and there is a danger to start the ethnographic study with the pre-existing ideas or theories (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, pp. 158-190). New theories may emerge based on the analysis of ethnographic data. The ethnographer may also analyse the data with multiple theories or with multiple perspectives for theoretical triangulation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). As suggested by Hammersley and Atkinson, I utilized a wide range of relevant theories to analyse and interpret the findings derived from the ethnographic fieldwork based on the idea that the literature should be used in context. Therefore, the major part of the literature review, including the relevant theories, has been embedded in the analysis part of the thesis. In this chapter, I will briefly introduce the literature in order to provide a broad overview of refugees, integration, Australian immigration policy and integration practices.

2.2 Who are Refugees

In this chapter, I have provided a brief overview of literature relating to refugees, integration, and Australian multicultural policy and practices. In the next chapter, I will discuss the methodology used in this study.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology used in this study. It begins with an exploration of the ethnographic approach as a methodological framework for the study. Then, the subsequent sections describe site selection, participant selection, data collection, data analysis procedures, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Methodological Framework

The purpose of this study was to investigate various social and cultural factors associated with language learning and the integration process of adult Bhutanese refugees. The study was open, holistic and exploratory in nature. The methodological approach I chose was thus qualitative and based on the ethnographic field-work. The study was informed mainly by the interpretive paradigm (Creswell, 2003) because it aimed to understand the lived experience of refugees from the emic (or the participants') perspective and how they make sense of their experiences by studying them in their natural settings.

Silverman (2013) suggests that the research methods "should be our servants, not our rulers" (p.11). The choice of a particular research approach – whether qualitative or quantitative – is linked to the research questions that are being addressed. Silverman further suggests that the research questions can be answered "by using qualitative approach to document the detail of how people interact in one situation and quantitative approach to identify the variance" (p. 14). In other words, a qualitative approach is appropriate to find answers to how-questions, and a quantitative research to how many- or what-questions.

Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 10) lists four key features of qualitative research:

1. Data are collected in natural settings, so that we have a strong handle on people's real life;

2. Data are collected over a prolonged period of time so that we can understand how and why things happen as they do;
3. It takes a holistic approach in order to gain a complete picture of complex social behaviour;
4. It brings the strength of local groundedness; data are collected in close proximity to a specific situation.

These principles outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) prompted me to choose a qualitative approach so as to provide a detailed description of the sociocultural contexts of language learning and integration of adult Bhutanese refugees. Research questions in this study sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the process (how) rather than the end product. As such, the study was not aimed at testing pre-existing hypotheses, as in the positivist paradigm, but rather to gather data to build theories from observations and intuitive understanding.

Qualitative research is an umbrella term covering a wide variety of research approaches such as ethnography, case study, phenomenology, narrative inquiry, poetic inquiry, and arts-based research (Saldana, 2011, p. 2). Out of them, I chose ethnographic approach for this study.

3.1.1 An ethnographic approach

Ethnography, traditionally rooted in anthropology, is used across disciplines as an investigative model to study a targeted community (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 1) and its patterns of behaviour (Heath, 1982, p. 33). It is a way of understanding the culture of a particular community (Fetterman, 2010; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Watson-Gegeo, 1988), which means how people in a given community think and act in their everyday circumstances. It is concerned with group characteristics rather than the attributes of the individual self because culture is a shared behaviour among members of a group (Watson-

Gegeo, 1988, p. 577). The concept of culture in this study is consistent with Fetterman's (2010, p. 16) notion that it incorporates both the materialist perspectives (such as patterns of behaviour, customs, language) as well as the ideational perspectives (such as ideas, beliefs, attitudes).

Ethnography encompasses both a process and a final product (Fetterman, 2010; Lecompte & Schensul, 2010; Watson-Gegeo, 1988). As a process, it is a method of inquiry, and as a product, it is a detailed description and interpretation of culture-specific patterns of behaviours and meanings attached to those behaviours.

Ethnography is aimed at providing a thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the cultural group under study. The thick description can be achieved by a number of different insights that an ethnographic approach can bring. First, ethnography tends to be holistic and interpretive in nature (Bloome, 2012; Fetterman, 2010; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Watson-Gegeo, 1988). Heath (1982) argues that although a completely holistic study of culture is not practical, it permits the ethnographer to explore the interdependence of cultural elements (such as language, behaviours, norms, beliefs), "which is greater than the sum of its parts" (p.42). Second, data are collected in natural settings (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; LeCompte & Schensul, 2010) – that is, the contexts that are not specifically designed for research purposes. Third, it involves prolonged fieldwork (Fetterman, 2010; DuFon, 2002), requiring the ethnographer to immerse oneself in various anthropological contexts (Fetterman, 2010; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). Fourth, it incorporates both emic (culture-specific insider view-point) and etic perspectives (outsider view-point) into data collection and analysis (Fetterman, 2010). Fifth, the ethnographic data are triangulated (DuFon, 2002; Fetterman, 2010) by comparing different data sources that enables the ethnographer to check the accuracy of interpretation and understand the "multiple perspectives of reality" (Fetterman, 2010, p. 21).

3.1.2 Why ethnography?

I chose an ethnographic approach for this study for a number of reasons. I wanted to investigate the everyday context of language learning and integration of Bhutanese refugees. The ethnographic field work in the form of prolonged observations could enable me to study the Bhutanese refugee community in its natural settings across a range of contexts and document the way its members constructed social meanings about their everyday experiences. Given the exploratory nature of this study, the "interactive-reactive" approach (Zaharlick, 1992, p. 120) of ethnography allowed me the flexibility to modify the research questions in response to the initial data exploration and incorporate what appeared to be of most important. The holistic approach was important in understanding learning and integration experiences of refugees, their everyday sociocultural environments and their meanings within their cultural environments. Given the advantage of data triangulation, the findings generated from observations could be used where possible to strengthen and complement the findings derived from interviews.

3.1.3 The ethnographer

An ethnographer as a human instrument (Fetterman, 2010, p. 33) is the most important data-collecting tool. This tool gathers data through extensive field work. The ethnographer should be neutral and non-judgemental when exploring the emic perspective of the study participants. Van Lier (1988) argues that "if this neutrality is absent, the foundations on which ethnography is based are also absent" (p. 40). The role of an ethnographer is thus to strike a balance between emic and etic interpretations of the phenomena being examined.

My identity in relation to the Bhutanese community was a combination of both insider and outsider. I was an insider to the community in my subject position as Nepali who spoke the same language as my participants and came from the same Southern part of Nepal. My

identity as a former cultural orientation trainer helped me to establish good rapport and immerse myself into the culture and community being examined. It also enabled me to undertake the field work close to the native point of view.

However, Fetterman (2010) warns that being too familiar to the setting or group may sometimes result in accepting the events without questioning them and leave important information unseen (p. 39). To minimize this potential risk, Stephenson and Greer (1981) suggest that the ethnographer should draw a clear demarcation between their prior knowledge of the cultural system and their membership in the specific social system under study (p. 130).

In light of these insights, I tried to ignore any preconceived biases and contradictory experiences by being as open as possible while entering the field for data collection. I tried to present myself as a person who did not have prior knowledge about Bhutanese refugees and their experiences. During the interviews, I tried to create a setting where participants could feel at ease to express their views where I tried to listen without any imposition and judgement. Nonetheless, the preconceived beliefs could not be completely avoided. Furthermore, the cultural and communication skills gained from my previous refugee training experience was helpful for me in establishing a rapport and a relationship of trust. However, I attempted to mask my identity as a former IOM employee in front of the research participants so as to minimize the potential risk of power imbalances that could inhibit them from disclosing information more freely. In this respect, I tried to construct my identity as an outsider to the Bhutanese community. This identificational ambivalence is consistent with the suggestion of Van Maanen (2011) that the role of ethnographer is that of "part spy, part voyeur, part fan, part member".

3.1.4 Classroom ethnography

A second language (L2) classroom is socially and culturally connected to the rest of people's everyday life (Bloome, 2012, p. 14; Van Lier, 1988, p. 86). First, learning the target language and culture of the host society in a classroom setting enhances the learner's capacity to participate in the everyday social activities beyond the classroom. Second, how a learner uses the language reflects their cultural identities and social relationships (Bloome, 2012, p. 20). However, the L2 classroom is only one part of the learner's social world (Van Lier, 1988, p. 81); and language learning also takes place outside the classroom through participation in everyday social interaction.

The ethnographic research in the L2 classroom was originated by Hymes (1974) in a desire to investigate the ways language learners organize their interactions in academic discourse (Toohey, 2008, p. 178). Classroom ethnography as a research approach investigates how the interactions of the learners in the classroom "both reflect and refract the multiple social and cultural contexts in which they are embedded" (Bloome, 2012, p. 11). By investigating L2 learning from the learners' and society's point of view (Van Lier, 1988, p. 81), the classroom ethnographer can explore the interrelationship between learners and their larger sociocultural world (Van Lier, 1988, p. 82) and can document "cultural practices, shared meanings, and cultural models" (Bloome, 2012, p. 20). Drawing on this usage-based view, this study considered language learning as a social process and explored how social and cultural contexts influence learners' use of the target language and their learning within the AMEP classroom.

3.2 Research Design

The typical feature of ethnography is that it does not necessarily follow a well-defined research design because the new research questions and research design evolve as the study progresses (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 3). However, a purely inductive approach,

particularly for a novice researcher, may be a waste of time (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 16-17). Therefore, an individual conducting qualitative ethnographic research should develop an initial framework, which can be reformulated as the study goes on (Miles & Huberman, 1994, Heath, 1982; Watson-Gegeo, 1988).

In this study, I developed some working plans for data collection and analysis prior to the commencement of the field work. As the field work progressed, I refined my research framework in response to the initial observations and interviews. The following subsections discuss the research site, data collection, and data analysis procedures.

3.2.1 Research site

This study took place in the northern part of the State of Tasmania. Fetterman (2010) suggests that the ethnographer should spend prolonged periods of time with the community being studied in order to observe and document its members' behaviours, experiences, and interpretations across sociocultural contexts (p. 33). Following the advice of Fetterman, I chose Tasmania as my research site since it met three criteria. First, this research site was easily accessible for extensive field work in terms of time and distance. It is the same region where my university is located. Second, Tasmania remains the third largest site of Bhutanese refugee resettlement in Australia (DIAC, 2011). The Bhutanese community leader estimates that as of 2015, about 2,000 Bhutanese refugees have been resettled in this state, including Hobart (in the south) and Launceston (in the northern part of Tasmania). This number seems to be increasing every year as many resettled refugees try to sponsor their families to come to Australia. Third, being an island state and less cosmopolitan, Tasmania has relatively little experience of ethnic diversity compared to the mainland cities. As such, it is relatively a less researched site from the perspectives of immigration, everyday multiculturalism and integration.

Tasmania's small population has demonstrated overall sluggish growth for several years. Demographically, the arrivals of new immigrants are overshadowed by the departures of working-age people from the region (Clarke, 2016). Despite this, this isolated state has received refugees from several countries including Bhutan, Burma, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Eritrea (DIAC, 2011). Most of the resettled Bhutanese refugees in Launceston live in three major suburbs: Mowbray, Newnham, and Invermay. The three suburbs are close to one another and have similar demographic and infrastructural conditions.

The Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) is the service provider in northern Tasmania, which assists newly-arrived refugees and migrants by providing a range of services to meet their initial settlement needs, including housing, transportation, and access to health care, welfare, and migrant English classes. Tasmania Technical and Further Education (TasTAFE) is the AMEP service provider in the region. It offers various English courses to help refugees acquire a functional level of English (DIAC, 2011, pp. 3-5). New adult refugees coming to Tasmania are placed in one of the four English levels, beginning at preliminary course and progressing through to Certificate III (intermediate level).

3.2.2 Data collection

A qualitative researcher selects a few samples for study but investigates them in depth (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 3; Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 27). To provide an in-depth picture of refugees' language learning and integration landscapes, this study relied on two distinct sites for data collection: one, the adult migrant English program (AMEP) that is instituted by TasTAFE; and another, the sociocultural contexts that refugees encounter in everyday life. The data collection incorporated three different sources commonly used in ethnographic investigation: participant observations, interviews, and reflective journal study. The data for the study of sociocultural contexts of classroom language learning were

collected using video-recorded longitudinal observations and retrospective interviews with focal students and teachers. The data for the study of out-of-class contexts for language acquisition, social networks, and integration came from on-site observations in the home, neighborhood, and a church; interviews with refugee participants and service providers; and reflective journal study. The triangulation of data, where possible, from these multiple sources would allow for the strengthening of "the scope, density, and clarity of constructs developed during the course of investigation" (Zaharlick, 1992, p. 120).

Using a criterion-based (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 69) approach, I made a conscious effort in the selection of research sites and recruitment of participants of varying characteristics. The recruitment of participants with different pre-established criteria would help me to triangulate the data for accuracy and capture the multiple perspectives of the phenomenon studied (Fetterman, 2010).

3.2.2.1 Classroom observation

Within TasTAFE, two AMEP service provider classrooms were selected for this study. One classroom contained students who were beginners in English; and the other classroom contained students who were intermediate-level English learners. In both ethnically heterogeneous classrooms, the majority of students were Bhutanese refugees.

For the recruitment of participants, I first contacted the team leader of the AMEP service provider who served as a gate keeper during the field work by providing me with access to the teachers and scheduling a meeting with them. A brief meeting was arranged with interested teachers during which I explained the aims and background of the research project and nature and purpose of the classroom observations. After obtaining consent from the teachers, I visited the respective classrooms to introduce myself, explain my research to the students and obtain their signed informed consent. A letter explaining the purpose of the study and what would be asked of them during the study was distributed to all students.

Interpreters were used for non-Nepali speaking students needing English language assistance. Students were made aware that their participation in the study would be voluntary and that any information provided would be treated confidentially. If any single student in a class did not agree to participate, I did not consider the respective classroom for the observation so as to respect the rights of each individual not to be excluded from the learning experiences. Based on these criteria, two classrooms (one beginner and one intermediate) were eventually selected for the study out of a total of 10 classrooms in the adult migrant English program.

After obtaining informed written consent from the students, I began my fieldwork from May 2014. The observations in the beginner's English class were carried out on every Thursday and Friday from 15 May to 13 June in 2014, for a total of around 40 hours. Similarly, the observations in the intermediate English class were conducted on every Wednesday from 22 October to 3 December in 2014, for a total of around 32 hours.

The main purpose of classroom observations was to capture a detailed account of students' participation behaviours during instructional discourse, by taking Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion that the novices gradually move from peripheral to central participation. The focus was concentrated on the Bhutanese students and their interactions with each other, with other students their teachers, and the teaching approach. Examples of observations include: the dynamics of instructional settings and nature of student participation (Duff, 2002; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993), extra-linguistic features of participation (Dufon, 2002, p. 44), and social and cultural dimensions in interaction patterns (Duff, 2002; Seedhouse, 2004; Van Lier, 1988).

My role in the classroom during the observation was mainly that of a non-participant observer (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 205). Wolcott (1999) suggests that being disconnected from the setting is better than taking the risk of misleading the setting by the involvement of the observer (p. 49). Following the advice of Wolcott, I tried to distance

myself from the students and record field-notes of classroom events, instructional discourse and interactions.

During the non-participatory observation, the classroom data were recorded using a video recorder. The video camera was set up before the class began and at some distance from the students so as to keep the setting as naturalistic as possible. The classroom video recordings allowed me to capture a comprehensive picture of students' participation behaviours (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 206), extra-linguistic information (Dufon, 2002, p. 44-45) and broader classroom environment. Non-native speakers, particularly those with limited target language proficiency, may rely extensively on the extra-linguistic means to convey their messages during social interaction. This extra-linguistic information can thus provide important insight regarding the extent to which the focal students have been socialized into the English target language norms and the community (Dufon, 2002, p. 44). Another advantage of videotaping was that with repeated viewings I could change my focus and see things that were not noticed during the field work.

3.2.2.2 Church observation

At the time of the AMEP interview with focal Bhutanese students, one Christian participant pointed out that her regular interactions with native English speakers in the church were the most significant factor for the improvement of her English oral communication skills. Her comment led me to further explore for what opportunities were available for such language development and to what extent the refugees made use of those opportunities. Less scholarly attention has been paid to the role of the mainstream Australian church in refugee integration and language learning process.

After obtaining the written permission from the coordinator of the church, I visited the Brighton Baptist Church (pseudonym) on three consecutive Sundays starting from November 2014. The church was located in the heart of the Launceston city in northern Tasmania. The

morning worship service was held from 10 am to 12 noon on every Sunday; this was then followed by a half hour morning tea event held in an adjacent hall. I usually went to the church half an hour before the service commenced so that I could observe different patterns of social interactions from the early-arriving congregants.

I used an opt-out approach (Clark, 2011) to recruit the participants for the observation in the church. Given that the explicit written consent of every church member was not possible in such public space, the consent was obtained from the church coordinator who then conveyed information to the congregants about my research project on the first day of the observation.

My role in the Brighton church was that of a participant observer (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 196) where I straddled dual roles. I participated in worship and cultural activities as other congregants, while at the same time I kept detailed field notes of intercultural interactions, events and activities that took place within the church.

3.2.2.3 Interview

In this study, qualitative interviews were conducted with a total of 14 informants, nine men and five women. Out of the total participants, eight were Bhutanese refugee students in the AMEP classes, two were AMEP teachers, one was an elderly Hindu Bhutanese learning English through home-based tutoring, one was a Bhutanese pastor in the Brighton church, one was an English-speaking coordinator of the church and one was the Bhutanese community leader. Among the eight Bhutanese students in the AMEP classes, four were intermediate learners of English and the other four were beginner learners of English.

The interviews with different key participants were conducted at different times of years during 2014 and 2015. For instance, following the completion of the observation in the intermediate English class in TasTAFE, four Bhutanese students, two men and two women, were recruited and interviewed in June 2014. The retrospective interviews in which the

participants reflected on their observed practices was the most appropriate interview method for this study, as it would allow me to verify the findings obtained from the observations. A separate written consent was obtained from the participants for the interviews.

Interview is a cover term that incorporates everything from very informal conversation to a highly structured formal interview (Wolcott, 1999, p. 44). Of these, semi-structured and informal interviews were chosen for this study. In the semi-structured interview, the researcher has a pre-established interview guide, but also has a flexibility to add and modify the questions to be asked (Fetterman, 2010, p. 42). The semi-structured interviews were used to discover the feelings and perceptions of the participants (Saldana, 2011, p. 32) and stimulate recall and reflection on their experiences. Similarly, the informal interviews were used to establish and maintain a good rapport with the participants (Fetterman, 2010, p. 41) and carry out a debriefing at the end of the interview.

The interview questions were generally related to the two main topics of this study: language learning and integration. Given the holistic nature of this study, questions were asked on a range of issues relating to research questions. The AMEP participants, both the teachers and the students, were asked about their classroom experiences and perceptions related to teaching, learning and curriculum. The interviewees from the church were specifically asked to examine the language learning and social networking opportunities that may arise through membership within this religious institution. Additionally, all Bhutanese respondents were encouraged to recall and reflect on their past and present experiences for topics related to refugee situation, immigration, ethnic networks, cultures, social interaction, integration and everyday multiculturalism. As an example, the core questions used for the semi-structured interviews with Bhutanese students at AMEP classes are included in the Appendix 1.

The face-to-face interviews were conducted at the locations chosen by the participants for their convenience, mostly at their homes or the TasTAFE building. The total duration of the interviews ranged from 45 minutes to two hours. Interviews with the Bhutanese respondents were conducted in Nepali, the native language of the interviewees and the interviewer. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and translated later into English. The use of the audio recorder during the interview allowed me to keep the flow of the conversation as natural as possible and later analyse the data from the emic perspectives (Fetterman, 2010, pp. 19-22). Some Bhutanese women seemed to be reluctant to be interviewed alone by the male interviewer (Chase, 2011, pp. 55-62). In such case, they were accompanied by another trusted woman as a chaperone, ensuring that the chaperone could not listen to what was being discussed during the interview.

3.2.2.4 Reflective journal

Ethnographers often use participants' reflective journals as sources of data collection. In a longitudinal study of language learning experiences of adult immigrant women in Canada, Norton Pierce (1995) asked her participants to keep records of their everyday interactions with the Anglophone Canadians and reflect on their experiences from the critical race feminist perspective. The review of participants' reflective journals was a major tool of data collection in her study.

In this study, one young male Bhutanese participant was invited to write reflective journal entries about his English language use and identity reconstruction in the workplace context. The participant kept records of his experiences of workplace language socialization and his feelings and thoughts about his English interactions with his colleagues and Anglo-Australian customers. Periodic reflective writings were composed by the participant for over a month from 14 October to 15 November 2014. The participant was offered regular guidance and mentoring during the course of his journal writing. The data obtained from the

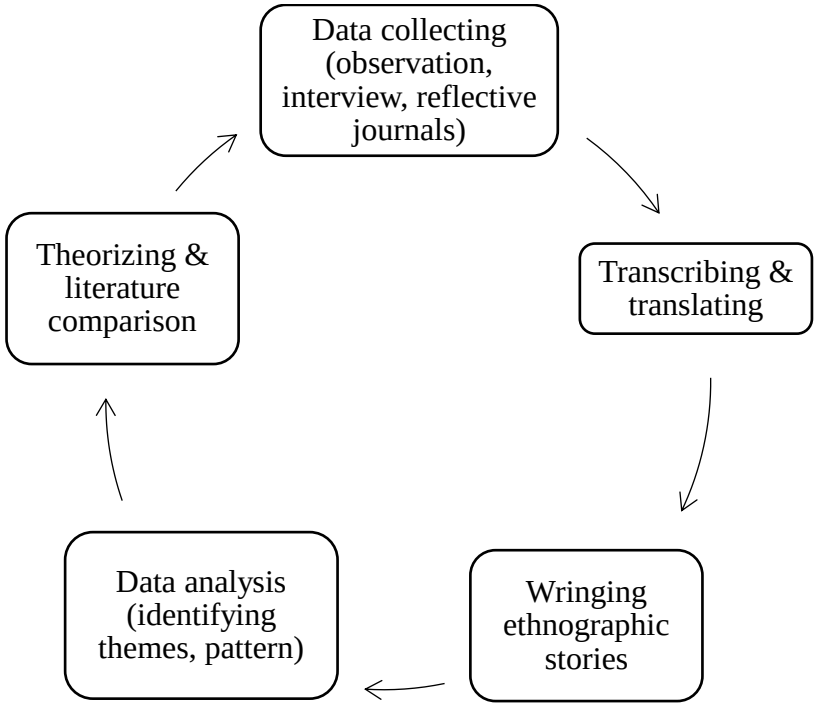
reflective journals were examined to provide a general insight into natural language learning of the focal refugee participants in their host society context.

3.2.3 Data analysis

A distinctive characteristic of ethnography is that the process of data analysis is iterative (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; LeCompte & Schensul, 2010) in that it moves back and forth in a cyclical pattern of data collection, analysis and theorization. In qualitative ethnography, new theories or ideas may evolve from the data. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) describe this cyclical process as a dialectical interaction between the data collection and analysis (p. 158).

There is no ready-made recipe of how ethnographic data should be analysed (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 157). Different authors suggest different ways of analysing the data (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Maxwell, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994;). As suggested by Hammersley and Atkinson, data analysis involves three key steps that include: identifying categories, developing typologies, and generating and testing theoretical ideas. Conversely, Maxwell (2005) explains the data analysis process within the framework of categorizing and connecting strategies (p. 95-99). The process of data analysis used for this study is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Cyclical process of data analysis



In this study, data analysis began from the early stage of data collection. I first familiarized myself with the raw data by repeatedly reading through the transcripts and making a sense of what was emerging within the initial data set. The first step in the data analysis was to explore the data, identify the data of interest, and find themes and patterns that recurred in the data.

Drawing on the data from interviews with Bhutanese respondents, I created the profile of each participant outlining their background information (see part B). This includes their pre-migration experiences, their educational and socio-economic backgrounds, their migration trajectories, their family and community connections, their language learning goals and outcomes and their aspirations for their own lives. The pseudonyms were used to protect the anonymity of the participants.

The data were separated into five target categories conforming to the contexts of investigation: beginner's English class, intermediate English class, Brighton church visit, elderly Hindu Bhutanese and workplace language socialization. Using a combination of

observation and interview data, the findings relating to each category were reported as case studies in a narrative, story-telling, format (see part B from chapter 4 to chapter 8). Following the coding protocols developed by Auerbach and Silverstein (2003), these categories were coded into subcategories based on the themes that appeared to be recurrent and relevant to the research questions. For example, within the category of beginner's English class, there were subcategories such as co-ethnic network, gender influences on intercultural interaction and contradictory expectations regarding grammar teaching. While presenting the findings, I provided illustrations using data drawn mainly from observations and participant's reflective journals.

The observation data were supplemented where possible by excerpts from participants' direct responses so as to demonstrate further confirmation of emerging themes and patterns. However, I had to rely on the interview data alone where observation was not feasible. For example, the interview data were mainly used to examine the ways in which the Bhutanese respondents understood and constructed their own identities around ethnicity, language, race and religion (see chapter 13.4).

As the next step of data analysis, I explored the relationships within and between categories and identified the similarities and differences across categories (Maxwell, 2005, pp. 95-99). It helped me to construct the category scheme in which subtypes of categories were generated and their mutual relationships were displayed (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 172). The interpretation of the findings was done using a range of existing theories from the fields of second language education, immigration, sociology, and anthropology. Some of the theories I have examined and applied in the analysis and interpretation of data are the following: social capital theory (Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000), social identity and L2 acquisition (Norton, 2013; Norton Pierce, 1995), sociocultural theory of language acquisition (Collentine & Freed, 2004; Duff, 2007, Lantolf, 2000), immigrant acculturation and

integration theory (Ager & Strang, 2008; Berry, 1997; Phinney, 1996). The analysis of data based on these multiple theories is presented in Part C of the thesis from chapter nine to chapter 13. This process of data analysis can be considered as data theorization. It allowed me to draw some new insights in the field of investigation.

3.2.3.1 Macro and micro classroom data analysis

The recorded classroom data were analysed using ethnographic macro and micro level analysis techniques (Duff, 2002). The macroscopic analysis examines the broader social and cultural contexts of the classroom (Duff, 2002, p. 293), whereas the microanalysis is concerned with exploring the social and cultural organization of a particular interaction event (Garcez, 2008, p. 257). A combination of macro and micro analyses helped to understand both the broader cultural context of the classroom and the interaction patterns in a particular speech event. The ethnographers investigating classroom learning have increasingly incorporated both macro and micro levels of analysis (Duff, 2002; Garcez, 2008; Gilmore & Smith, 1982; Tsui, 2013; Watson-Gegeo, 1988). In a classroom ethnography of a Canadian school, Duff (2002) provided a macro-level contextualization of the classroom and focussed on the speech events of two lessons for microscopic analysis. In this study, the integration of macro-and micro-level data aimed to capture a holistic picture of the classroom language learning process (Gilmore & Smith, 1982, p. 10) of the refugee students.

In this study, I observed several lessons in each classroom to get a broader sense of the classroom environment including classroom norms, routine activities and general interaction patterns. However, analyzing everything in detail was not possible. Therefore, for the microscopic analysis, I chose a few speech events that were representative of the overall interaction patterns (Tsui, 2013, p. 27). For instance, in the macro analysis, I identified that the classroom social networks based on ethnic familiarity had not only positive effects for Bhutanese students, such as, access to bilingual peer support, but also possible negative effects

on their oral English practice in academic discourse. Then, in the micro analysis, I illustrate this point drawing on some extracts from the speech events of the Bhutanese group (see chapter 4.2.3). For a micro-ethnographic analysis of the social studies classroom, Duff (2002) selected the extracts from two lessons out of the sixteen lessons that she had observed.

In this study, turn taking strategies were a major focus of the microscopic classroom data analysis (Duff, 2002; Seedhouse, 2004; Van Lier, 1988). Language learning takes place through meaningful interaction in a communication setting (Lantolf, 2000; Norton Pierce, 1995; Van Lier, 1988, p. 91). The sequential distribution of turns in classroom conversation events provides the learners with the opportunity to participate and practise their spoken language skills. It also stimulates learners to participate actively in planning and structuring their contribution to a particular speech event (Van Lier, 1988, p. 106). Turns in classroom interaction are governed by certain regularities (Van Lier, 1988, p. 94). The regularities of turn-taking – that is, who speaks when – are usually predetermined in classroom conversation. However, there may be conflicts and potential tensions in a cross-cultural conversation within groups (Duff, 2002, 300). The purpose of the microscopic analysis in this study was to explore such conflicts and their impact on classroom language learning.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations for this study were addressed by obtaining permission from the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). This study received full ethics approval on 29 April 2014 (see Appendix 2) and the approval for some amendments to previously proposed research was granted on 29 October 2014.

The foreseeable risks of this study were such that the questions asked during the interviews with Bhutanese refugees had the potential to trigger their past traumatic memories. This study employed a semi-structured interview guide that required the participants to reflect on their background issues – their past and present experiences, their trajectories of

migration, and their cultural and societal contexts – which would influence their language learning and integration into their host society.

Some efforts were, however, made to minimize such risks of harm to the participating individuals. The participants were advised through the information sheet that their involvement in this study would be voluntary and that they could withdraw their participation at any time without any clarification. Those who wished to participate were informed about the potential benefits and risks of being involved. Their informed written consents was obtained before the data collection started, which was also re-affirmed from time to time. Given that many of the focal participants in this study were a vulnerable group of refugee adults who were illiterate even in their own languages, the information in the consent form was interpreted verbally into their own languages by certified interpreters. It was also ensured that the consent procedure was witnessed by the TasTAFE team leader, teachers or community leaders, depending on the convenience of participants. The participants were also advised of the free counselling service they could access through Phoenix Centre – Migrant Resource Centre in Launceston, Tasmania.

The audio-and video-recorded data were labeled with pseudonyms; and the confidentiality of the data were maintained throughout the study. The document linking participants' real names to pseudonyms was stored separately from the data in a password-protected computer. The audio-and video-recorded data, along with the hard copies of the transcripts, were stored in the Launceston Campus of the university in locked cabinets accessible only by the research team. Computer files were password protected and stored on a secure server in the Faculty of Education, Launceston campus of the university.

In this chapter, I have discussed the methodology and ethical considerations associated with this study. This concludes Part A of this thesis in which I have provided an introductory overview of the research project. Part B presents the detailed stories of the

research participants by contextualizing their experiences within the historical, social, cultural, and pedagogical environments of language learning and integration. The next five chapters of part B, from chapter 4 to chapter 8, are mainly devoted to the ethnographic descriptions of participants' lived experiences across five different contexts: the beginners' AMEP class, the intermediate AMEP class, church visit, home visit and workplace socialization.

Part B: Ethnographic Stories

Chapter 4

Beginners Class in English

This chapter provides a narrative ethnographic account of the English beginners' class, with particular reference to Bhutanese students and their experiences of language use and socialization in the classroom. I will firstly outline a macro-level description of the classroom setting and the study participants, and then provide an in-depth description of students' experiences relating to their participation in various classroom language learning activities.

4.1 Classroom and Participants

4.1.1 Classroom

The classroom was large, warm and bright and located on the second floor of the TAFE's main building. The physical set up of the room looked quite formal. The seating structure involved four parallel rows of desks with individual chairs where the students sat facing the teacher. There was enough space between the desks to allow students and teacher to walk around as they needed. At the front of the room there was a large whiteboard which the teacher frequently wrote on when presenting new language items. There was also a television in the classroom but I did not see the teacher use it during the periods that I observed the class. At one end of the room there was also a large table which held cups, coffee and sugar, plus hot and cold water.

4.1.2 Participants

There was a total of 17 students from six different ethnic backgrounds. Bhutanese students comprised the largest ethnic group. Of the total, nine students were Bhutanese (Hem, Maya, Rama, Dipa, Dhan, Rupa, Goma, Raju and Dil), three were Burmese (Zaw, Myo and Thi), two were Afghans (Tamana and Aarif), one was Punjabi (Abha), one was Filipino (Minh) and one was Chinese (Ning).

Although seventeen students were registered initially, not all of them attended every session. Rupa and Zaw stopped attending the class after a few weeks while Maya, Dipa, Rama and Minh did not come to class for a few weeks during the middle of the program. The Bhutanese women attributed their irregular attendance to their domestic responsibilities at home. Maya explained it as:

> I have the responsibility of taking care of father-in-law and mother-in-law. They often get sick and I have to stay at home. I have to work in the kitchen and serve them food from time to time. Sometimes the children also get sick. Honestly, I don't want to go to the school because I am trapped in the family's jail. I am a housewife and I have three children. Also, I feel like I'm getting old. What I study I forget quickly because I can't concentrate much.

Tanya was the teacher at the time of this study and she was the only native speaker of English in the classroom. Tanya had taught students of all ages, nationalities, and backgrounds for seventeen years prior to her commencing teaching at this class a few months earlier. She always appeared cheerful and active.

The nine Bhutanese students in this class shared some similar characteristics. They had lived for at least two decades at one of the seven refugee camps in Nepal before they came to Australia. The length of their stay in Australia varied from nine months to two years. They had all completed at least grade 5 at the refugee schools but no one had completed grade 10. They were all married and all had children except for Rama. Additionally, all of them had some basic knowledge of English before they immigrated to Australia.

The following subsections present a detailed background description of four focal Bhutanese students who were under observation in the classroom and were also interviewed independently. The interviews also covered some of their experiences regarding their social networking and interaction within and outside their ethnic community. The four focal students comprise of Hem, Maya, Raju and Rama.

4.1.2.1 Hem

Hem was a 37 year old Bhutanese male student. He was born in Bhutan in 1978 and arrived in Australia in March 2013 with his Nepalese wife and their little girl aged 3. Before coming to Australia Hem had spent 22 years in a refugee camp in Nepal; there he had attended a refugee school and completed grade 8 at the age of 25. He said his life in the refugee camp was very distressful. He stated "without a citizenship, without an identity, it is very difficult to live."

Despite the challenges, Hem had wanted to live permanently in Nepal. Thus he married a Nepali woman so that his children would get their Nepali citizenship from their mother's national identity and thereby have a better life there. Although Hem was unhappy about moving from Nepal to any foreign country, he had felt obliged to come to Australia because his youngest aunt had immigrated a few months earlier and she had exhorted Hem's family to immigrate also.

Hem indicated that he still had a strong desire to return to Nepal once he earned some money in Australia. He believed that his life in Nepal would be "more simple and easy" than in Australia because his "language, costumes, culture, facial expressions and appearance are all identical to other Nepalese".

After Hem's family arrived in Australia, they rented a two-bedroom apartment in a suburb where no other Bhutanese families were yet residing. Hem indicated that, because his family was the only migrant family in the suburb, he had regular exposure to Anglo-Australian people with whom he managed to practise his oral English through participating in social interactions.

Hem indicated that he never spoke English at home with his wife or daughter because he considered it extremely important that his daughter learned the Nepali language and that she be immersed in the ethnic Nepali culture. Due to his daughter having a great deal of

exposure to English in the English-speaking Child Care Centre, Hem was anxious that she would not be able to speak Nepali and that she would lose her cultural identity. He believed that being able to speak Nepali was very important for his daughter; this was not only to be able to communicate smoothly with her grandparents back in Nepal but also in order to learn their ethnic culture and retain her Nepali identity. Due to this, Hem spent some time every day teaching his daughter the Nepali language. He stated, "I teach her how to write the Nepali alphabet and how to pronounce Nepali words. She is also learning the Nepali grammar".

Hem joined the AMEP course at TAFE as a beginner-level student in May 2013; he had been studying there for more than eighteen months. Although Hem acknowledged the value of the AMEP course with respect to improving his English, he indicated that he had no real desire to study because he believed that he could learn English faster in the workplace than in a classroom. He said, "I think that if we go to work and interact with the people, we can learn more quickly. But when we study, we write down the different words. Writing them down on the notebook, we can't learn to speak". Regardless, he felt obliged to attend the class because "other Bhutanese of the same age also attend the class".

4.1.2.2 Maya

Maya was a 30 year old female student. She was born in Bhutan in 1984 and arrived in Australia in August 2013 with her husband and three children - two daughters aged 12 and 8, and one son aged 6. Before coming to Australia, Maya had spent 21 years of her "very miserable" life at a refugee camp in Nepal. Maya had completed grade 5 in a refugee school where she had also learned some basic English to the extent that "I could tell my name and address… but not in a full sentence". Maya got married at the age of 17. She then quit her schooling because she had to perform domestic tasks at her home as well as earn some money working outside of the refugee camp.

On being asked why she immigrated to Australia, Maya said “Several other people at the refugee camp started moving to the foreign country, so we did also”. Although Maya did not have any hope for her own future in Australia, stating “I can’t do anything here at this age”, she hoped that her children would get a better education here and that their English would become proficient.

It had been a year since Maya enrolled in the beginners’ class of the AMEP course and she felt that she had made some progress with her English. She could now do some public tasks on her own such as make an appointment at the hospital, fill out simple forms and do the shopping. However, like Hem, Maya also indicated that she had no desire to study at the school because of her lack of “study habit” as well as the restraints of domestic responsibilities at home.

Maya reported that she usually did the domestic tasks at home and that her husband, whose English was better than hers, did the public tasks of dealing with the real estate agent, making hospital appointments and dealing with Anglophone neighbours. Maya indicated that she occasionally practised her English with her children at home but that she never spoke English with her husband or her parents-in-law. She indicated that speaking English with them was a sign of disrespect. She said, “If I speak English, they tell me that I have been over-smart to him that I am disrespectful to my husband”.

In the community where Maya now lived there were a large number of Bhutanese, and she had very strong social connections with them. She commented “With other Bhutanese here, we often visit each other’s houses. I often go to my (Bhutanese) friends’ houses on the weekends and they also come to see me”.

4.1.2.3 Raju

Raju was born in Bhutan in 1979 and arrived in Australia in March 2014 with his wife and three children - two sons aged 15 and 9, and one daughter aged 10. Before coming to

Australia, Raju had spent 20 years at a refugee camp in Nepal where he completed grade 5 at the refugee school. Although Raju had wanted to study further, he reported that he could not pursue his studies after he got married because he then had an obligation to earn money and support his family.

On being asked why he immigrated to Australia, Raju said, "I lived so many years in Nepal but I could not buy or own any property. I hope that at least my children will have better future here". Before their arrival, his wife's family and her relatives were already living in Australia. Upon his arrival, Raju's parents-in-law organized the rental of a two-bedroom house which was close to their own home and to those of other relatives.

After nine months of studying English as a beginner in the AMEP class, Raju felt that he had made significant progress; he now did not need an interpreter at the hospital, Service Tasmania, and Centrelink, or to make an appointment at school or do the shopping. Unlike Hem and Maya, Raju had a strong desire to keep studying in the AMEP class. His strong motivation to study English was associated with his responsibility as head of the family. Because Raju considered himself this way, he felt that it was his responsibility to deal with the public and to carry out external tasks on behalf of his family. Thus, Raju was aware that he needed to be a good speaker of English in order to deal with English-speaking Australians so as to perform his public tasks. He said:

> I am the head of the family. I need to be proactive myself. None of them here tell me, 'you have to do this to become an Australian'. I have to learn it myself ... to do my household responsibilities. So I have to focus on studying.

Although both Raju and his wife studied English at the same level, and presumably both had a similar command of the English language, Raju reported that he usually spoke on behalf of the family when they had to deal with native speakers of English in everyday life. Raju explained, "I have to speak to deal with public tasks. My wife also lets me speak if I am with her. So I usually speak with native English speakers in the hospital, Centrelink and at

other offices". Raju's role as the family spokesperson provided him with more opportunities than his wife to use English interactively with English-speaking people in everyday contexts. In addition to his use of English when carrying out public tasks, Raju also visited a church where he had a great deal of exposure to use and learn English (see chapter 6).

4.1.2.4 Rama

Rama was born in Bhutan in 1987 and arrived in Australia in May 2013 with her husband and father-in-law. Before coming to Australia, she had spent twenty-one years of her "horrible life" at a refugee camp in Nepal where she had completed grade 8. Rama got married at age 18 and then stopped attending school because she had to perform the domestic duties at her home. On being asked why she immigrated to Australia, Rama reported that it was her husband and her father-in-law who had made the decision. Rama also indicated that she had very little knowledge of English before she came to Australia.

Although it had been more than a year since Rama enrolled in the beginners' class of the AMEP, she felt that she had not made great progress in learning English. She blamed herself for not improving, saying "The reason may be that I feel shy. I do not actively speak in the class. So I am backward everywhere". Like Hem and Maya, Rama also had no real desire to study English at the TAFE school. Rama considered herself as a "shy" and "dull" woman and believed that she could not make great progress even if she studied English for a long time. Her lack of motivation in attending the English learning program was also associated with her domestic responsibilities at home.

Rama reported that she did not have any exposure to English outside of the classroom. Because Rama felt too "shy" to speak and had a very limited command of English, it was her husband who usually performed the public tasks such as making hospital appointments, dealing with the real estate agent and doing the shopping. Rama usually stayed at home, took

care of her father-in-law and did the domestic chores. In her leisure time, she visited the homes of her relatives and friends.

This section has been dedicated to outlining the background information of the four Bhutanese students who attend the English beginners' class. In the following sections, I will detail their classroom language learning experiences, with particular attention to issues surrounding their participation in different pedagogical contexts.

4.2 Classroom Ethnic Network

As the largest ethnic group in the class, the Bhutanese students were able to maintain strong social connections with their own co-ethnic peers by relying overly on each other for academic purposes and informal socializing. The following subsections detail the ways in which these co-ethnic classroom networks influenced the way they approach their learning of English.

4.2.1 Bilingual peer support

Bhutanese students were much reliant on their co-ethnic network for academic support during their lessons. Through the use of their native language (L1) within the Bhutanese circle, they checked the spelling and meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary, discussed sentence structures, sought clarification of the teacher's instructions, and checked each other's sentence structure.

Rama always turned to her Bhutanese peers for academic help during the lessons. She reported that she felt more comfortable seeking help from them rather than from the teacher or non-Bhutanese peers. She attributed this to the fact that she could use her L1 as a tool for communication within her Bhutanese group. She commented, "My English is very poor - so I cannot understand much of what the teacher or other students say. But I can ask my Bhutanese friends in Nepali".

Rama reported that her Bhutanese network was particularly beneficial for her when checking the spelling or meaning of unfamiliar words and/or when something in a lesson was not understood by her. The following observation excerpt illustrates how Rama found out the meaning of the unfamiliar term *main meal* by using bilingual peer support.

> The lesson was about food and drink habits. The students were asked to complete sentences that described their own eating and drinking habits by using food and drink vocabulary - for example: 'I eat _____ for my main meal'. Tanya put students into pairs so that they could collaborate and help each other to complete their tasks. She paired Rama with Thi (Thai female) and Maya with Dhan. During the activity, Rama wanted to find out the meaning of 'main meal'. She asked Thi: "Main meal? You know?" but Thi just shook her head in silent reply. She probably did not understand Rama's question or it might have been difficult for Thi to explain in English. After a while Rama asked Maya in Nepali, "Maya! what is the meaning of main meal? Is that the meal we eat at night"? Maya turned to Rama and explained in Nepali, "This main meal means what you eat as your biggest meal".

As shown in the above excerpt, Rama's L1 interaction with Maya scaffolded her learning process; it enabled her to understand the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary and thereby accomplish her language-learning task. Although Rama first attempted to get the meaning of the unfamiliar term by asking her non-Nepali speaking peer through the use of English, their joint inadequacy in the target language hindered their verbal interaction. Rama then used her L1 to ask Maya who successfully explained the meaning of *main meal* by providing its equivalent translation in their L1.

The classroom co-ethnic network also enabled Bhutanese to check their sentence structure. This type of peer support and feedback helped them to amend an incorrect answer before offering it in front of the whole class. The following observation excerpt illustrates how the peer feedback enabled Maya to produce the correct form of the target language during the whole-class discussion. It was a 'guess who I am?' game in which Tanya had chosen a mystery person and the learners had to find out the mystery person's name by asking her multiple questions requiring yes/no answers such as 'do you wear glasses?'

1 Tanya: Maya. Please ask me. Who am I?

2 Maya: Are you curly hair? (with low voice, and then turns her face to Dhan and said in Nepali) Maybe! I don't know! Dhan, what should I say?
3 Tanya: Ask me, Maya. Ask yes/no question.
4 Maya: (said in Nepali) What can I say? (turns her face to Hem)
5 Hem: Do you have?
6 Maya: Do you have a curly hair?
7 Tanya: No, I don't have curly hair.

Maya asked Tanya in English whether the mystery person had curly hair (Turn 2) but she expressed uncertainty on whether the question she uttered was linguistically correct. Given her uncertainty, Maya used L1 to check the structure of her English sentence with Dhan at Turn 2 and with Hem at Turn 4. In Turn 5, Hem offered feedback to Maya, advising her to use the structure 'Do you have' instead of 'Are you'. After Hem's feedback, Maya modified her question and eventually produced the target language using the correct grammar structure (Turn 6).

Like the Bhutanese students, Tanya also expressed a positive attitude towards their L1 use for peer support and learning. She considered the students' use of L1 to be a learning tool due to most of them having inadequate English proficiency. She believed that it assisted them in seeking clarification of her teaching instructions and helped them to check their comprehension of unfamiliar vocabulary. Tanya stated that the bilingual peer support "saved time in the class" and "promoted cooperative learning".

4.2.2 Barrier to cross-ethnic socialization

Due to the class having a large number of Bhutanese who could use their L1 for their in-group communication, they also became excessively reliant on this circle for informal socialization. This, in turn, limited their opportunities to socialize with and practise their oral English with non-Bhutanese classmates. Hem commented on this:

> There are people from different backgrounds in the class. We Bhutanese are there and we speak only Nepali with each other. There are also Afghans. They do not talk to us and we do not talk to them. There are also Burmese. They talk to each other in Burmese. We speak only when the teacher asks us to make a conversation. Otherwise, we do not even look at each other's face.

Before the class began and during their breaks, Bhutanese students usually engaged in lengthy L1 interactions with their co-ethnic peers. This made them socially and linguistically segregated from students of other ethnicity. Some Bhutanese seemed reluctant to even greet the students of other ethnicity unless Tanya pushed them to do so. The following observation excerpt illustrates this:

> When I walked into the room ten minutes before the lesson began, I saw four Bhutanese students (Hem, Goma, Maya and Dhan) sitting on their usual seats and talking loudly to each other in Nepali. Tanya was standing at the front of the room, planning her lesson. After a while Rama came into the room and sat in the last row next to Minh. She did not greet anybody. Dhan, who was seated in front of Rama, asked her in Nepali "You arrived, Rama"? Rama gave a short answer in Nepali "Yes". They then began talking to each other, using L1. Rama and Minh did not utter a single word to each other. Later Dipa entered the room but did not greet anybody. Instead, she sat down next to Dhan and started talking with him in Nepali. Paradoxically, one week earlier Tanya had taught the students about the different forms of greeting in English during the greeting lesson.

Although Tanya constantly encouraged the students to greet all their classmates and reinforced the fact that a greeting is very polite in Australia, most of the Bhutanese students still avoided greeting and socializing with their non-Bhutanese counterparts. During their breaks, several Bhutanese huddled together in one corner of the room and interacted amongst themselves in Nepali while eating their snacks together.

Raju attributed his disinclination to socialize with his non-Bhutanese peers to his inadequate proficiency in English and his over-reliance on the L1 network. Like Raju, Hem's reluctance to develop social connections with his non-Bhutanese classmates was associated with the existence of the strong Bhutanese network. He commented, "We have too many Bhutanese. So I do not feel the need to interact with others. Also, our Bhutanese people will make a bad comment about me if I ignore them and avoid communicating with them".

4.2.3 An example of overuse of L1 inhibiting target-language practice

The students showed a greater tendency to use their L1 extensively even in situations which required only English to be used for conversation skills to be developed. This tendency

was explicitly observed during the 'information-gap activity'. In this communication task, students were required to seek and exchange personal information through questioning and answering in English. The following observation excerpt is an example indicative of students' tendency to use L1 during the information-gap activity.

> During a lesson about 'eating and drinking habits', the students were instructed to walk around the room asking and answering a set of questions in order to find other students who had similar eating and drinking habits to themselves. Before the activity, students had recorded their own eating and drinking habits on a sheet of paper. The pedagogical objective of this communicative task was to provide the learners with practice in the configuration of formed questions such as: 'what do you eat for a main meal?' and 'what do you eat for lunch?' and 'what time do you eat breakfast?' However, when the activity began, the majority of the Bhutanese (Dipa, Raju, Dil, Rupa and Rama) huddled together in the back of the room segregating themselves from other students of different ethnicity. Some Bhutanese just copied the answers from their classmates' papers rather than using the questionnaire for seeking out their own answers. Others used their L1 rather than English to ask and answer the questions. None of the Bhutanese in that group produced the target language to obtain the information required for the completion of their task.

The speech event below illustrates their use of L1 during the activity:

1 Raju:	(said in Nepali) Do you eat meat or fish?
2 Dipa:	(said in Nepali) Oh, yeah, that's right. I had written 'meat', but I saw 'rice' on my friend's answer-sheet, so I also changed mine.
3 Dhan:	Dipa?
4 Dipa:	(said in Nepali) Yes?
5 Dhan:	(said in Nepali) Is my answer same as yours?
6 Dipa:	(said in Nepali) Let me see. Which one?
7 Dhan:	(said in Nepali) Do you eat breakfast at 8 o'clock?
8 Dipa:	(said in Nepali) I eat fried rice.
9 Dhan:	(said in Nepali) What do you eat in the afternoon?
10 Dipa:	(said in Nepali) Only milk. Not much. Just write 'milk'.
11 Raju:	(said in Nepali) You write 'milk and coffee'?

The pedagogical purpose of the information-gap activity was to develop students' conversation skills by engaging them in tasks that stimulate peer interactions in English. However, English interactions were not necessary for the Bhutanese to complete their tasks because they easily accessed the needed information by looking at their friends' answers. They were over-reliant on their friends' ready-made answers rather than seeking answers through questioning (see Turn 2 above). Furthermore, some Bhutanese did ask questions to

seek out the needed information but only by using their L1. Thus their interactions were focussed on finding out the required information from their peers rather than producing and practising their English.

When asked why they used L1 even in situations where they were expected to practise their English, the interviewees reported that they were used to speaking only Nepali when interacting with other Bhutanese. They also pointed out that their shyness and fear of being criticized inhibited them from using English when interacting with their Bhutanese peers. Hem explained this as:

> Although we should try to speak English with other Bhutanese in order to improve our English proficiency, we are used to speaking only Nepali. When we see Bhutanese faces, we spontaneously speak Nepali. Also, we Bhutanese have a tendency to insult others. That's why people feel a hesitation to speak. The Bhutanese will backbite me if I speak English with other Bhutanese. They think that I'm being over-smart. That's why we have to speak Nepali with other Bhutanese.

Although Hem was aware that he could improve his oral English if he practised with his Bhutanese peers, he was reluctant to do so because he was afraid of being disparaged by them. Ultimately, his fear of being criticized by co-ethnic peers impeded his practice of English conversation.

4.3 Gender and Cross-Ethnic Socialization

With regard to any socialization by the Bhutanese with students from other ethnicities, it was obvious that they felt more comfortable and had more interactions with students of their own gender. Gender differences were especially evident in the organization of their seatings, the selection of peers for group work, and for participation in intercultural interactions.

Students usually sat in self-selected seatings and their seating arrangements were somewhat based on their gender. It was observed that, at all times, there were only female students sitting in the front row. Conversely, except for Rama, there were only male students sitting in the last row. Most Bhutanese tended to sit near to those of same gender, regardless

of their ethnicity. Maya usually sat either in the front row between Tamana (Afghan female) and Ning (Chinese female) or in the second row between Dipa and Goma. Dipa always sat in the second row to the left of Rupa. Goma mostly sat in the second row next to Thi (Burmese female). Furthermore, all Bhutanese male students (except Dhan) sat in the last row. Raju always sat on the far left next to Aarif (Afghan male), Hem usually sat between Aarif and Minh (Filipino male) and Dil sat next to Minh.

On being asked why they preferred to sit with their same-gender peers, Maya reported that in her Nepali-Bhutanese culture "it is unacceptable if a married woman sits or walks together with a man other than her husband". Maya had a fear that she would be criticized or judged negatively by other members of her community if she sat with students of the opposite gender. Raju also pointed out that he preferred to sit with same-gender peers because he felt more comfortable in approaching male students over female students for any academic help.

Gender differences were also evident in the selection of peers for group (or pair) work. When Tanya let students pick their partners for pair work they usually preferred to choose someone of the same gender. This repeatedly resulted in all the male students pairing with male students and female students pairing with other female students. Only very occasionally would a few Bhutanese students pair off with other Bhutanese of the opposite gender.

Tanya was very conscious of the fact that student segregation in terms of their gender is not considered acceptable for an Australian classroom. Consequently, she did try to mix up the two genders when she assigned members for group exercises. However, in doing so, their participation seemed to vary according to the gender of their peers within the working group.

The verbal contributions of Rama varied greatly according to the gender of her partner during the peer interactions. She seemed relatively relaxed and confident when working with some non-Bhutanese female partners (such as Thi). However, she appeared

very hesitant and could not make any conversation when she was paired up with Aarif, an Afghan male student. The following excerpt illustrates Rama's reluctance to talk to Aarif during their peer interaction:

> It was a 'Guess who I am?' game. Students had to work in pairs as Speaker A and Speaker B. Speaker A had to choose a mystery person from the picture board and Speaker B had to find out his/her name by asking 'yes/no' questions. The pedagogical purpose was to develop the students' speaking ability by asking the yes/no questions. Tanya paired Rama with Aarif, a middle-aged Afghan male student. After Tanya's request, Rama hesitantly walked up to Aarif and sat down keeping some distance between them. She did not make much eye contact with him. She covered her face with her hand over and over again. Aarif also appeared to feel too awkward to approach Rama. After a while Rama initiated the conversation. Her first utterance was "you ask me" while pointing to Aarif. This indicated her self-positioning as a respondent and Aarif's positioning as the questioner. Accepting his role as the questioner, Aarif asked Rama "you are woman?" and Rama responded with nods. However, then Aarif asked Rama his next question, "you wearing hat?" but Rama remained quiet. It seemed that she did not understand Aarif's pronunciation. Aarif repeated his question but again Rama did not give a response. Aarif then stopped asking questions. Rama did not even tell him that she did not understand; she just gazed down. Sometimes she looked at other students but she did not look at Aarif's face. Thus, Rama was unsuccessful in sustaining a conversation with Aarif. She sat hesitantly in front of Aarif for a while and then walked off.

Rama attributed her feelings of discomfort with male students to her minimal social exposure to men in her everyday social life, and to the negative view of her community towards heterogeneous friendships and/or relationships. Rama further added that her neighbours at the refugee camp in Nepal would tend to view her negatively and consider her as a "characterless girl" if she talked to, or walked together with the male refugees.

Maya was an outgoing and vocal Bhutanese female student. She always appeared verbal and active in the whole-class discussions. However, with regard to her conversations with students of other ethnicity, she also interacted differently with non-Bhutanese male and female students. The excerpt below illustrates Maya's unwillingness to talk to Myo, a young Burmese male:

> The teacher asked all the students to walk around the room and to ask each other at least five personal questions (such as How are you? What did you eat last night? What did you watch on the television?). Rama and Maya were seated in the front row chatting with each other in Nepali. Myo came towards them and stood next to Maya.

> He looked at Maya and greeted her with "How are you?" Maya responded to his greeting with "I am little bit good." Then Maya turned quickly to Rama and said in Nepali "I will now make him leave here quickly". They laughed loudly. It clearly revealed that Maya did not want to talk to Myo. But Myo did not understand anything they said in their native language therefore he continued to ask more questions of Maya. Throughout the conversation, each took seven turns during which Myo asked three personal questions and Maya answered them very shortly. Although Maya was also supposed to ask questions of Myo, she did not do so. She only responded with very short answers to Myo's open-ended questions. Due to Maya's unwillingness to talk openly with Myo, they were unsuccessful in taking their conversation to a deeper level.

Moreover, I never saw Maya engaging in social conversations with any male students of other ethnicities. In contrast, she repeatedly had lengthy conversations with females of different ethnicities such as Thi (Burmese female) and Abha (Punjabi female). In addition to their academic interactions, Maya consistently engaged in informal conversations with these women. The following excerpt illustrates Maya's active participation in a social conversation where a group of women talked about feminine issues:

1 Tanya:	Are you pregnant (pointing to Tamana)?
2 Tamana:	No.
3 Maya:	Yeah (laughter). She has two daughters. Now, coming son. You birth a son. (laughter again)
4 Tanya:	Yeah. Did you want a son (pointing to Tamana)?
5 Tamana:	I like son but not.
6 Maya:	She has two daughter and liking boy. When I see your face then that time also you are pregnant. And what about you (pointing to Abha)? You also like pregnant.
7 Abha:	What?
8 Maya:	You also see for your face, you also pregnant.
9 Abha:	Kitchen?
10 Maya:	(demonstrates with gesture)
11 Abha:	Pregnant?
12 Maya:	It's just your face. When we pregnant, that time we are not active. Always time lazy, not work, not cooking. That time we are lazy. When we see the face, that time always time sick.

Like the female students, the Bhutanese males such as Hem and Raju also stressed the influence of gender on their participation in intercultural interactions. Hem attributed his limited social contacts with non-Bhutanese women to his lack of familiarity with their cultures. He found it very difficult to talk to the Muslim women because he had heard from

his friends that "the Muslim women do not talk to the men other than their husbands". Hem also reported that although he attempted a few times to socialize with them, he felt unwelcome and they were unresponsive. Hem's reluctance to interact with the women was explicitly observed on many occasions.

Like Hem, Raju also admitted that his interaction with female students was quite minimal compared to the male students. He spoke with female students only when "the teacher makes it mandatory to talk to everyone in the classroom". Raju indicated that it was his shyness that inhibited him from talking with the women. He reported that, even when he had attended the refugee schools back in Nepal, he would always tend to remain isolated from the girls.

4.4 Grammar or Speaking? The Contradiction

Tanya spent a great deal of time teaching students 'writing' and 'grammar' because she believed these were the major components of the AMEP course. She claimed that these were the most challenging aspects of language learning for students because "they actually have to put something on to paper rather than just being receptive". The following lesson excerpt is an example indicative of the process used when teaching a point of grammar and/or writing skills:

> The lesson was aimed at familiarizing students about the use of the words 'and' and 'but'. Firstly, Tanya introduced these two linking words by providing sentence examples on the whiteboard (such as Australia is a big country and it is beautiful). She then explained the linguistic rules that govern the use of 'and' and 'but'. Next, she distributed a worksheet that listed pairs of simple sentences to each student (such as Launceston has beautiful weather. Launceston has a lot of parks). The student volunteers read out these pairs of sentences to the whole class and Tanya explained how they could be put together to make a complex sentence. Following the discussion, she asked the students to each write out a couple of complex sentences about their families using the linking words. They were then asked to share their writings with their paired partner in the form of a speaking activity.

Tanya presented many such lessons that focussed explicitly on grammar, for example: the use of 'there is' versus 'there are' as singular and plural verbs, verb tenses, personal

pronouns, subject-verb agreement, and singular and plural nouns. When introducing a new grammar point, Tanya was inclined towards presenting the grammar rules by illustrating their use in sentence examples. She then engaged the students in individual or group activities where they had to practise the grammar point in written and/or oral formats.

When students repeatedly made a mistake in their use of a particular grammar point (such as 'has' or 'have', 'this' or 'that', 'do' or 'does'), Tanya would give additional exercises which allowed her students to practise these more. For example, on one occasion she pointed out that a lot of students were making mistakes in using 'has' versus 'have'. She then invited students to verbally practise their use in example sentences through an oral repetition drill (such as I have two sisters, she has one brother).

In addition to grammar practice, Tanya also overtly corrected the grammar mistakes made by students so that they could produce error-free utterances. The following excerpt illustrates such an error correction occurrence where Tanya insisted that Raju use the plural noun 'restaurants' with a plural determiner 'three'.

1 Tanya:	Okay, number 2, please Raju.
2 Raju:	(reads the No. 2 sentence from his notebook) There are three restaurant.
3 Tanya:	Okay but I heard 'there are' good, 'three' good, 'restaurant'?
4 Students:	(in chorus) Restaurants.
5 Tanya:	Restaurants. Must have the 's' coz it's 'three'. Again please Raju, try No. 2 again.
6 Raju:	(reads the sentence again) There are three restaurants.

Contrary to Tanya's pedagogical focus on grammar and writing skills, the Bhutanese students expressed their dissatisfaction in studying those aspects of the English language. The interviewees reported that they preferred to learn speaking skills of English rather than grammar and writing. Rama found writing and grammar not useful in her everyday social life. She stated that she preferred to focus on improving her conversational skills so that she could communicate with Anglo-Australians in public places like shopping centres, hospital etc., and to also converse easily with her Burmese and other non-Bhutanese friends. Like

Rama, Maya also indicated that she wanted to improve her conversational skills so that she could obtain a beginner job. Maya felt that she had no hope of ever studying at the university or of getting a well-paid job therefore could see little reason for learning about 'how to write'. She maintained that writing was not important for her everyday social life.

Hem felt that the English he was taught in the classroom was different from the English that people spoke in everyday life. He stated that the classroom English was mainly based on grammar rules and that was something he did not want to study. He thought conversational English was more important. However he was reluctant to relate this to his teacher because he felt that it would be rude to suggest to a teacher that "you should teach me speaking, not the grammar".

4.5 Teacher-Led Classroom Discussion

Teacher-led whole class discussion was one of the most common instructional practices utilized in the beginners' class. The pedagogical purpose of such discussions was to familiarize students with new language items and particularly with word pronunciation and correct use of grammar. Examples of these classroom discussions could include grammatical items such as subject-verb agreement, the use and location of prepositions within a sentence, the composition of questions and answers.

The following excerpt is an example of a whole-class discussion. The lesson topic was 'how to write a description about a house' and the grammar point that Tanya was trying to focus on was the use of 'there is' versus 'there are'. Before the discussion began, the students had been provided with pictures of different types of houses.

1 Tanya:	What can you see in the first picture? Hem, please?
2 Hem:	(looking at the picture in his worksheet) Garage.
3 Tanya:	Okay. 'There is a garage'. So remember to use 'there is', 'there are'. Okay? That's why we learned it. So we can use it. So you can say 'there's'. 'There's a garage.' And what else is there in the first picture?
4 Hem:	Driveway.
5 Tanya:	'There is a garage and a drive way'. That's good. What else is there? How many levels?

6 Students: Two levels.
7 Tanya: So you can say ‘there is’ or ‘there are’?
8 Maya: There are.
9 Tanya: ‘There are two levels’. Is it a big house or a small house? What do you think ‘big’ or ‘small’?
10 Goma: Big.
11 Tanya: Yeah, so what do we need here? If we say ‘a big house’, what do we need here?
12 Maya: There is a.
13 Tanya: No. ‘It is’. So use a contraction ‘It’s a big house’. Okay? Is it a very big house?
14 Students: No.
15 Tanya: No. Okay. Just ‘big’. All right. What else can you see?
16 Goma: Outside garden.
17 Tanya: ‘There is a garden’. ‘It’s a big house and it has a’. How do you describe the garden? What else? What other words can you use to talk about the garden?
18 Tamana: In front house.
19 Tanya: You can say ‘in the front’. What’s a good word to describe a garden? Is it an ugly garden?
20 Thi: No. Beautiful.
21 Tanya: Maybe.

As shown in the above excerpt, the sequence of interactions in such discussions typically followed the initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) pattern. Tanya initiated the sequence by asking questions, the students produced short responses, and then Tanya evaluated their responses either by giving feedback or repairing their errors. Tanya was the recipient of nearly all the utterances produced by the students. Tanya’s role was authoritative in the exchange as she had the power to initiate and control the turn sequence. She regained the floor after every turn taken by the students. The students’ responses were very short and formulaic, usually just with a single word or phrase.

Tanya’s talk dominated most of the whole-class discussions throughout all these lessons. Out of a total of 3731 words produced in eight different whole-class discussions (a total of 381 turns), Tanya alone uttered 3245 words (87%) and took 190 turns. For her, the average words per turn were 17.07. In contrast, the students produced only 486 words (13%) while taking 191 turns. Most of their utterances comprised of a single word or phrase. The average words per turn of the students were only 2.54.

Oral participation of the majority of the Bhutanese students was comparatively minimal. Many of them tended not to speak during whole-class discussions except when Tanya particularly called on them. This was something she did very rarely. A couple of outgoing Bhutanese (Maya and Hem), as well as students of other ethnicity (Tamana and Thi), took most of the turns that were contributed by the students. Out of a total of 191 turns (486 words) taken by all students in eight different whole-class discussions, Maya took 43 turns (130 words), Hem took 25 turns (61 words), Thi took 37 turns (80 words) and Tamana took 30 turns (88 words). In contrast, Rama, Dil and Rupa did not take a single turn and Raju, Dipa and Dhan took only 7 turns altogether, totalling 2-6 words each. Tanya confirmed that the majority of the Bhutanese students asked few questions and that their oral participation in such whole-class discussion was comparatively less to the other students.

It seemed quite obvious that, irrespective of their gender identity, only a few Bhutanese students such as Maya and Hem were lively and vocal in the whole-class discussions. Maya reported that she did not feel any hesitation to speak English in front of the whole class despite the fact that her spoken English was fairly poor. She said, “I don’t care even if the other people laugh at my English. I feel confidence to speak”.

Unlike Maya, both Rama and Raju indicated that they felt uncomfortable talking in a whole-class discussion due to their lack of confidence about their speaking ability, and because of their fear of making a mistake in front of other people. Raju stated, “I worry unnecessarily… that I may make a mistake or may use a wrong word or can’t express myself fully. I feel like if I make a mistake, what will other people think about me?” Similarly, Rama attributed her hesitation in speaking in front of the whole class due to the fact that she had experienced very minimal social participation in such public settings in everyday life, even when she used to live at the refugee camp in Nepal. She reported that she felt comfortable

speaking to her friends and relatives but felt hesitation in speaking with people in public places such as Government offices.

4.6 Peer to Peer Casual Conversation

Peer-peer casual conversation was another classroom activity routinely used in the beginners' class. Every day, before class began, Tanya asked all the students to walk around the room and talk with their peers on everyday topics using the language items they had previously been taught, such as 'how are you?, pretty good, fantastic, what did you do last night? what did you do on the weekend?*'* Tanya stated that the pedagogical purpose was to mingle the students with each other in order to build up their relationships; thereby they could work more effectively together and also improve their conversational skills.

Most Bhutanese were initially quiet and passive. They looked very reluctant to approach their peers. The following excerpt is a description of my first observation of a 'casual conversation' lesson:

> Tanya asked the students to move around the room and practise their greeting expressions with at least five different fellow students. However, nearly all the Bhutanese students, including Raju, Hem, Rama, Dil, Dipa and Rupa, just stood up at their desks but did not walk around the room. They waited passively for somebody to come to chat with them. The majority of them were even too reluctant to approach each other. The other students from different ethnicities (such as Thi, Myo, Tamana and Abha) walked over to the Bhutanese and briefly interacted with them. Most of the Bhutanese students talked to only one or two others within the specified time. They usually remained quiet. When they did talk, they just produced the prescribed language verbatim, even without making eye contact. They also used Nepali to a much greater extent when their conversational partners were Bhutanese. Gender identity also influenced Bhutanese participation. None of the Bhutanese male students except Dhan talked to a female student, and none of the Bhutanese female students except Rama talked to a male student.

Realizing that the majority of the students were reluctant to participate in conversation, Tanya then established a new classroom etiquette for the students to adopt from the second week onwards. She requested that, every morning, each student must say 'good morning, how are you?' to everybody else in their class. Tanya also reminded them of this

regularly. For example, on 5 November she said to the class before a new activity, "You must talk to everyone else…. you must. This is the requirement".

Due to such stipulations, students felt a sense of compulsion to speak with everybody in the classroom. Although Hem had told me that he felt uncomfortable speaking with the women, I did see him also engaging in the required interactions with female students of different ethnicities. I observed him actively walking around the room for these conversations and approaching three females (Maya, Tamana and Abha) and two males (Aarif and Dhan) within the given five-minute time limit. It was the first time that I had seen Hem interacting with female students since the beginning of my observations.

Tanya also continued to push individual students to get out of their comfort zones, insisting that they keep moving around the room and greet each other. If she noticed someone remaining quiet, she exhorted him/her to be active. This is exemplified in the following excerpt:

> Dipa was standing quietly in front of her seat while her friends in the same row (Goma, Thi, and Dhan) were actively moving around and communicating with their classmates. Seeing Dipa's reluctance to interact, Tanya came up close to her and shouted "Come on Dipa… Move! Move! Move!!" After a while Dipa walked up to Rama at the back of the room near the door and said something inaudible in English. Then other female students also walked towards them, one after the other, and overcrowded the space. Recognizing that they were not interacting, Tanya shouted at them "Keep moving! You are all over the door!" Rama and Dipa then reluctantly walked over to speak to other female students.

By my third week of observation, Rama seemed to be more active in casual conversation. As soon as Tanya asked students to interact with each other, Rama walked slowly toward Myo, approaching her with a smile. Her eye contact with Myo was also quite frequent during their conversation. The following speech event illustrates Rama's interaction with Myo:

1 Rama: Hello Myo, how are you today?
2 Myo: I'm very good, thanks. What about you?
3 Rama: I'm fantastic.
4 Myo: Fantastic.

5 Rama: What did you do last night?
6 Myo: I eating. Hahaha! (laughter)
7 Rama: First eating and hmmm sometimes watch the TV and sleeping.

Despite Tanya's requirement, it often appeared that the students did not approach all of their peers. When Tanya saw this she would tend to ask the individual student to walk around again and approach the remaining students. This is shown in the following excerpt:

> While students were wrapping up their conversations, Tanya asked the whole class "Did you say good morning to everyone"? Knowing that Hem had not talked to a few students yet, including Thi, Rama, Minh, and Tamana, she asked him to walk over to them and say good morning. Hem then reluctantly went to each of them and greeted them politely even though they were already sitting down in their seats.

As Tanya consistently placed more positive pressure on the students, the Bhutanese participation also seemed to gradually increase in these conversations. The language that they used in conversation progressed and became more exploratory and meaningful, and the amount of time they spent with each student also increased significantly. Tanya proclaimed their progress publicly when she said to the whole class, "I can remember that, maybe five weeks ago, your whole conversation was only 'Morning, how are you? Fine'. That was it. Now you don't stop talking. Very good…. that means you have lots more English."

Because Tanya had made the strict requirement that 'everybody has to greet everybody', the Bhutanese students considered their participation to be a matter of obligation. As Hem commented, "she strictly told us 'you should do this'…. then we did it". This reaction can be understood with reference to their perceptions of the role of a teacher. Most interviewees reported that they preferred a strict teacher in the classroom rather than a friendly teacher. Maya said, "I like the strict teachers. If they are strict, we work hard. We will have a fear that they will get angry and scold us. But if they are friendly we think they will do nothing and we will be backward".

Such expectations were derived and conditioned by their previous educational experiences at the refugee schools in Nepal. Maya stated further, "Since childhood we are

accustomed to working hard only when the teachers are strict". The refugee schools in Nepal followed the traditional teacher-centred educational system. The interviewees reported that they would tend to study hard in their refugee classroom because they had a fear that they would be punished by their teachers otherwise. Consequently, most of them considered the education system at the refugee schools to be very good because all were in fear of their teachers and, as a result, worked diligently for them.

This chapter provided an ethnographic description of language learning experiences of Bhutanese students in the beginners' English class. The next chapter details the learning experiences of the students in the intermediate English class.

Chapter 5

Intermediate English Class

This chapter provides a narrative ethnographic account of intermediate English class, with particular reference to Bhutanese students and their experiences of language use and classroom socialization. First, I will provide a macro-level overview of the classroom setting and the study participants, and then explore in depth their experiences of language learning in various pedagogical activities.

5.1 Classroom and Participants

5.1.1 Classroom

The classroom was situated on the second floor of the TAFE's main building, close to the beginners' classroom. The physical set up of the classroom looked quite formal. The room was furnished with three parallel rows of desks facing the front, and with additional desks situated against the wall on both the right and left sides of the room. At the front there was a large table and chair where the teacher usually sat during the class. In addition, there were two large whiteboards on the front wall and a television set in the left corner at the front. The room was warm and bright.

5.1.2 Participants

There were 20 students from six different ethnic backgrounds who were aged mostly in their twenties to their forties. Bhutanese and Afghan students formed the dominant ethnic groups. Of the total, one student was from The Philippines (Shaina), two were Sudanese (Sayed and Osman), one was Thai (Farung), one was Korean (Lee), five were Afghans (Zahir, Farhad, Kabir, Fatima, Ahmad) and ten were Bhutanese (Narad, Bhim, Kumari, Dipak, Puja, Chakra, Tek, Drona, Manju and Karna).

Peter, the intermediate class teacher, was an Anglo-Australian male in his early 50s. He had been teaching students of all ages and backgrounds for over twenty years. Peter was

in his ninth year of teaching English to migrant and refugee students in TasTAFE; he had taught students of different levels from preliminary to advance.

The Bhutanese students in the intermediate class shared some characteristics that differentiated them from those of the Bhutanese in the beginners' class. Unlike those of beginner-class, all the intermediate-class Bhutanese had, at minimum, finished grade 10 at their refugee schools prior to immigrating to Australia. Additionally, the majority of them had at least some educational experiences at private Nepali schools where English was the language of instruction. They all had some knowledge of English before arriving in Australia. These Bhutanese had been in Australia for between five months and two years. The following presents a detailed description of the four focal Bhutanese students (Puja, Manju, Drona and Tek):

5.1.2.1 Puja

Puja was a 27 year old married female who was born in Bhutan in 1989. After fleeing Bhutan with her parents and three siblings in 1992, Puja lived for more than two decades in a refugee camp in Nepal. She completed grade 10 at the refugee school and then attended grades 11 and 12 in a private Nepali college outside of the refugee camp. Although it was not legally permitted for refugees to seek paid employment in Nepal, Puja left the refugee camp with her elder sisters and worked as a primary-level teacher for one and a half years in a private school in a remote village in western Nepal.

Puja got married at the age of 24 after which she had to take on the household responsibilities at the home of her husband and his family; this prevented her from participating in any external activities. Despite "poor sanitation and financial hardship", Puja was generally happy with her life in the refugee camp in Nepal where she felt she had a "more meaningful life" and could speak her own language and practise her own culture.

Puja had no desire to emigrate to a foreign country. However her husband, who held more decision-making power within the family, insisted on immigrating to Australia because "many other Bhutanese including his parents and their families had already immigrated". After their arrival in November 2012, Puja and her husband joined her husband's extended family which included her parents-in-law, her sister-in-law, plus her brother-in-law and his family.

In Australia, Puja's primary roles within the family were that of caregiver and homemaker. Her father-in-law, who was the head of the overall household, handled family finances and usually did the grocery shopping. Puja's husband usually dealt with external tasks such as negotiating with the real-estate agent, taking his parents to the hospital and dealing with native English speakers at Centrelink.

Puja's large family lived in a four-bedroom house in Mowbray, a rapidly-growing suburb where a majority of the Bhutanese refugees resided; this included Puja's own parents and her siblings. Puja maintained close relationships with them; she often visited their homes and they celebrated Nepali rituals and festivals together. Puja's home was located in the centre of town therefore her parents and relatives also often came to her home.

Despite the challenges which Puja endured due to her limited English proficiency, she made positive comments about the standard of living in Australia such as "Australia is a very clean place, with lots of greenery. We have facilities of water, electricity, TV. Children can get a good education".

Puja had some knowledge of English grammar and writing before coming to Australia due to her constant exposure to English at her schools since the age of 7. However, she was not accustomed to speaking English because there was absolutely no need for this, even when teaching English classes in the Nepalese schools. Puja acknowledged this as "When teaching,

we used to read out English text for the students…. but to explain the text, we had to do that in Nepali".

Puja started the AMEP course at TAFE soon after she arrived in Australia and had been studying at intermediate level for about a year and a half. She indicated that the AMEP had helped her to improve her spoken and written English quite significantly as she could now "write an essay up to 300 words on various topics and also participate in basic conversations with friends". Further, Puja expressed her desire to continue studying English with a particular focus on spoken English. Her goal was to talk to native English speakers more confidently and to find employment in a place where speaking English was a necessity.

Puja indicated that there were very limited situations outside the AMEP course where she could practise her conversational English. She usually did the domestic chores at home and took care of her parents-in-law; it was normally her husband who spoke English on behalf of the family and who dealt with public tasks such as making hospital appointments and dealing with the real estate agent. On occasions Puja served as an interpreter between her non-English speaking parents-in-law and their volunteer English tutor who came to their home every Sunday. She never spoke English with someone 'superior' to her at home, such as her husband and her parents-in-law. However, she did sometimes practise her oral English with someone considered inferior such as her nephews.

5.1.2.2 Manju

Manju was a 24-year-old unmarried female who was born in southern Bhutan in 1990. She immigrated to Australia in early 2013 with her parents and two siblings. Manju was only one year old when she fled Bhutan with her parents and relatives and therefore she knew little about her country of birth. Manju had spent 23 years in a Nepalese refugee camp before coming to Australia. Manju's parents were chronically ill and Manju was the eldest child in the family; she therefore felt compelled to take on many family responsibilities at an early

age. She completed grade 10 at the refugee school by the age of seventeen. Manju then left the refugee camp in order to seek employment in a private Nepali school so that she could provide financial support for her family. Manju taught 1st to 5th grade English and science for one year in an English private school and this gave her extra opportunities to improve her English.

Manju had a strong network of friends, relatives and acquaintances in Nepal due to having lived in the refugee camp for more than two decades. In the interview she talked extensively about her refugee life there - often expressing her feelings of nostalgia and loneliness related to missing those friends and acquaintances. Despite her positive remarks about the standard of living in Australia, she indicated that she felt more attached to the country where she grew up. She commented "In terms of living standards and money, it is better here. But I spent 22 years in Nepal; I played with the mud there and made friends there".

Although Manju's family had no strong desire to emigrate to a foreign country, her chronically-ill father who was the head of the household made the decision to come to Australia with the hope that he and his wife would get free and better medical treatment. Manju supported her father's decision to migrate when she heard from her aunt in Australia that they could all have a better life here than in the refugee camp.

After Manju's family arrived in Australia, they rented a three-bedroom house in an area near to where her two aunts and their families resided. Manju reported that both her aunts' families provided her family with great support in finding their apartment and with providing assistance in learning how to use the western appliances. They had also helped them to learn the public transport system and obtain access to various settlement services.

Manju's responsibilities within the family increased significantly after immigrating to Australia due to her parents being illiterate in English, and because her younger sister felt too

shy to speak with Australians even though she had a good command of the language. Manju reported that her parents usually did the domestic work at home, including cooking, cleaning and gardening, while Manju was responsible for speaking English on behalf of the family and dealing with all the public tasks. Manju indicated that her responsibility as family spokesperson had increased her confidence in speaking English and had helped her to make significant progress in learning more.

Manju indicated that, apart from using English to carry out her domestic responsibilities, her regular participation in her church activities had also helped her English-speaking ability significantly. This had further increased her confidence when speaking with Anglo-Australian people. However, Manju stated that she never spoke English with her family or with other Bhutanese in the community because the use of English amongst them would be considered disrespectful or showing off. She explained "If I speak English at home or in the community they will assume that I'm showing off and that I am not being respectful to them".

Soon after Manju arrived in Australia, she started the AMEP course at Level II and then, one year later, she upgraded to the intermediate class (Level III). After living in Australia for eighteen months, Manju felt that she had made remarkable progress in learning English. Manju stated that she wanted to continue attending AMEP classes in order to become a more proficient speaker of English.

5.1.2.3 Drona

Drona was born in Bhutan in 1971 and immigrated to Australia in April 2013. He said that he had originally been happy in Bhutan where his family had their own family farm and access to free health care, free education and employment. Drona had finished grade 8 but had little knowledge of writing in English before he fled Bhutan at the age of 21 along with his illiterate parents and two elder brothers. After arriving at the refugee camp in Nepal,

Drona attended grades 9 and 10 at the refugee school. He then taught as a primary-level teacher for three years in various private schools in remote Nepali villages. Drona got married to a Nepali woman at the age of 29.

After having lived in limbo in the refugee camp for 21 years, Drona immigrated to Australia with his wife and two sons aged 10 and 6. Initially, Drona's elder brothers and their sons had rejected a third-country resettlement offer - not just for themselves but also for Drona's family. However, Drona ultimately decided to apply for resettlement hoping for a brighter future for his children.

Drona's extended family dispersed all over the world. After immigrating to Australia, he left behind his two brothers, his mother, and his father-in-law in the refugee camp in Nepal. One of Drona's elder sisters lived in Bhutan, another lived in Australia and one of his elder brothers lived in USA. Drona maintained regular contact with them via Skype, Facebook and telephone.

Drona's family lived in a three-bedroom house in Newnham which was very close to the university. He maintained strong relationships with his relatives and Bhutanese friends living in Tasmania. His wife's family, his relatives, and many other Bhutanese friends and acquaintances lived in the same suburb but in a different locality. Drona spent most of his time every day interacting and socializing within these Bhutanese networks. Conversely, Drona reported that he did not have any Anglo-Australian friends or acquaintances.

Drona considered himself to be head of his household and assumed his responsibility to act as spokesperson for his family. His identity as the family spokesperson provided Drona with some opportunities to speak English when dealing with the general public on the family's behalf. He explained "When we have to deal with the external tasks in public offices, both I and my wife go together but I speak English with the Australian people. My

wife also lets me to do so". Drona's wife was the caregiver for their children and usually did all the household chores.

Drona reported that Nepali was the only language spoken at home and in the Bhutanese community. When asked why he did not use English for communicating with other Bhutanese, he commented that doing so would be very "awkward" and "unacceptable". Consequently, Drona found limited situations where he could practise his oral English except in the AMEP classroom and at public offices such as the hospital or Centrelink. He commented "In a day, ninety nine per cent of total time, Nepali is spoken and only one per cent, English is spoken".

Despite the fact that Drona had received a reasonable amount of exposure to English in the schools in Bhutan and Nepal, he felt that his English was at "zero level" when he arrived in Australia. He was frustrated by not being able to understand the English used by Anglo-Australians in everyday social life. This was mainly because of his unfamiliarity with the Australian accent. As such, Drona pointed out that his primary language-learning goal in the AMEP class was "to be able to understand the spoken English of the white people".

Although it had been more than a year since Drona enrolled in the AMEP class at intermediate level, he indicated that his progress in learning English had been very slow. He blamed himself for his limited language acquisition and said "Maybe because of my own weakness, because I am the reserved type of person. Even for simple conversation, I couldn't speak". Drona indicated that the 510 hours of AMEP was not sufficient for him to become a proficient speaker of English and stressed the need to practise speaking English with Anglo-Australians outside of the classroom.

5.1.2.4 Tek

Tek was born in Bhutan in 1991 and immigrated to Australia in February 2014. Tek was only six months old when he left Bhutan with his parents and siblings. He grew up in a

refugee camp in Nepal with his extended family including his illiterate parents, two elder sisters, one younger brother, his aunt and his nephew. They all lived together in the same hut for more than two decades. Tek finished grade 10 at the refugee school and then attended grades 11 and 12 at a private Nepali college outside the refugee camp. After completing his high school at the age of 21, Tek married a girl 5 years younger than himself.

Tek stated that his life in the refugee camp was "miserable" because his large family had to live in a tiny bamboo hut without electricity and they had to survive on the inadequate food allowance provided by UNHCR. He was also frustrated by the fact that he could not financially afford to access higher education in Nepal.

When the third-country resettlement program started in the refugee camp in 2007, Tek tried to persuade his parents to apply for resettlement. However his parents rejected the offer arguing that it would halt their efforts to repatriate to Bhutan. After several more years of living in limbo, Tek decided to leave behind his parents and siblings and emigrate to a foreign country with his wife where they could look forward towards a brighter future. Tek was highly motivated to come to Australia after he received positive feedback about this country from his wife's parents who were already living there. He explained "I learned a lot about Australia - both about the positive and the negative things - from my in-law's family. I knew from them that the education system is very good here".

After arriving in Australia, Tek and his wife joined the household of his wife's parents which also comprised of three sisters-in-law, two brothers-in-law, two nephews and two nieces. Tek stated that he preferred living in a large family situation because it enabled the exchange of "all kinds of support" amongst themselves, thus resulting in collective benefits. Tek reported that he received "financial, emotional and other kinds of support" from his in-laws upon his arrival in Australia. In return, he assumed the responsibility of serving as

an interpreter for his parents-in-law and helped them deal with their external tasks at the hospital, Centrelink and other public offices.

There were many Bhutanese in the area where he lived, including his close relatives and friends. Tek maintained strong connections with them, visiting each other's homes frequently and socializing together during their spare time. Tek found only very limited English language-learning opportunities in the home and in his community. He stated that he could not speak English when communicating with his parents and other Bhutanese. When asked why he could not speak English with them, he reported that he "felt shy" and that speaking in English when Nepali could be spoken would be "a subject of criticism".

It had only been five months since Tek's arrival in Australia, and only four months since he had enrolled in the AMEP course at intermediate level. He said that he was happy that he had immigrated to Australia and was optimistic about his future life.

This section has been dedicated to outlining the background information of the Bhutanese students who attend the intermediate English class. The following sections will detail their language learning experiences in different pedagogical environments in the class.

5.2 Classroom Ethnic Network

Like the beginners' class, the students at the intermediate level maintained a strong Bhutanese network in their classroom. They used their in-group network for socialization, L1 interactions and for academic support. The following subsections are devoted to this specific issue and to the description of the influence of Bhutanese network from the perspective of language learning.

5.2.1 Strong ethnic socialization

Three Bhutanese women, Puja, Kumari and Manju, usually sat together in the front row and maintained a strong social connection during class. They spent much of their time talking and socializing with each other. Usually they came to class together and ate their

snacks together during their break time. They often chatted with each other in their L1 during the lessons, both for academic purposes and for informal socializing. When these Bhutanese women engaged in lengthy informal L1 conversations, Lee, the Korean woman who normally sat in the same row with them, tended to continue with her academic tasks alone.

Similarly, Tek, Karna, Narad and Chakra, the four Bhutanese male learners who usually sat side by side in the last row, would often turn to their ethnic network for academic discussions as well as informal socializing. They tended to segregate themselves from Shaina, the female Filipina student who usually sat in the same back row. The Bhutanese males were all of a similar young age except for Chakra. They often talked to one another in their L1 about academic tasks such as reading and writing, difficult vocabulary and previous lessons, as well as non-academic topics such as their families, each other's personal habits, Facebook posts and sports. Narad and Karna often went outside during the class to smoke cigarettes. The following excerpt is an example indicative of their co-ethnic socialization through the use of L1:

> In a writing exercise, the students were asked to individually write a paragraph about the effects of smoking cigarettes. Karna moved close to Narad and Chakra and asked in Nepali "Do we need to write about why we should not smoke cigarettes"? The three Bhutanese men then discussed the writing topic for about five minutes using their L1. After a while, Tek logged onto his Facebook page on his mobile phone and spent about seven minutes viewing his posts. Chakra moved close to Tek and had a short chat in Nepali pointing things out on Tek's Facebook posts. After this brief L1 conversation, Chakra and Tek went out of the room and disappeared for three minutes. Narad and Karna worked together, helping each other with the spelling of unknown words and sharing their writings. However, none of the Bhutanese males talked to the non-Bhutanese students (Shaina and Osman) who were seated in the same row during the lesson.

Furthermore, when I occasionally observed the Bhutanese students outside of the classroom, I found very little evidence of any social interactions with students of other ethnicity. Immediately after they exited the classroom, they usually grouped together with someone of their own ethnicity and engaged in L1 interactions. Their teacher, Peter, also

confirmed that the classroom was the only place where most of the Bhutanese students practised their English.

5.2.2 Bilingual peer support

Most Bhutanese usually worked with their fellow Bhutanese to get through their reading and writing tasks during the lessons. They predominantly used their L1 to discuss the lesson's topic with each other, to explain the meaning of unfamiliar words, and to check the spelling of words and/or sentence structures.

Puja reported that she felt much easier using Nepali when explaining difficult concepts and for seeking and sharing ideas openly. Therefore she preferred to always sit with her Bhutanese peers and ask them for academic help. Puja stated "I feel more comfortable in Nepali to understand things myself and to make others understand me. If I ask Afghans about the things that I don't understand, it is difficult for them to explain it in English". Similarly, Manju reported that she could memorize English words and sentence structures much better if she understood their meaning in Nepali. She also preferred to ask for support from her Nepali-speaking peers, Kumari, Drona and Puja rather than from her non-Nepali speaking peers Lee or Osman. The following excerpt presents an example of L1 interactions between Puja and Kumari during a speaking lesson. The lesson was about money management and the students were expected to discuss, in small groups, about whether someone could survive on $2 per day.

1 Puja:	(said in Nepali) I did not understand the question.
2 Kumari:	(said in Nepali) The question is whether you can live on $2.
3 Puja:	(said in Nepali) Does it mean whether we can buy all the food items with $2 per day?
4 Kumari:	(said in Nepali) It means whether you can survive if you only have $2 per day.
5 Puja:	(said in Nepali) What does 'oak tree' mean? It seems we have heard it, right?
6 Kumari:	(said in Nepali) 'Oak' means a type of tree and 'tree' means 'tree'. So 'oak tree' means 'a type of tree'.

In the above excerpt, the utterance in Turn 1 indicates that Puja was seeking bilingual support from Kumari to understand the topic for discussion. Kumari switched to Nepali to

interact with Puja and explained the question in Turn 2 by giving its equivalent Nepali translation. In Turn 3, Puja used L1 to validate her comprehension of the question and Kumari then clarified and elaborated on it in Turn 4, again using L1. Next, in Turn 5, Puja asked Kumari for the meaning of the unfamiliar words 'oak tree'. In Turn 6, Kumari explained its meaning by translating the words into L1. In this way, Kumari helped Puja to understand the topic for discussion by offering bilingual support and conveying the meaning of words and expressions using L1. Although their use of L1 helped with Puja's understanding of the topic, it also inhibited the production and practice of their oral English.

5.2.3 Use of L1 to avoid criticism

As described previously, Bhutanese students generally used L1 for both pedagogical and informal conversations with their co-ethnic peers. Although Puja felt that her L1 interactions were useful for receiving academic support, she was also aware that the use of too much L1 hindered her learning of oral English. When asked why she did not speak English with her Bhutanese peers, Puja told me that she "feel fear to speak English with other Bhutanese because they criticize me on my English use". She further claimed that, if there were only one or two Bhutanese in the class, she would probably feel more comfortable speaking in English.

Like Puja, Manju also stressed that having too many Bhutanese curtailed her English interactions in the classroom. Manju commented that using English when L1 could be used would be quite awkward and unacceptable. Manju believed that if the Bhutanese students were dispersed into different classrooms, and if the use of Nepali was "strictly banned", she could potentially make more progress in learning English.

Drona usually did his academic tasks alone but he also occasionally engaged in L1 interactions with his Bhutanese peers. I saw Drona interacting with Manju and Chakra more frequently and comfortably than with other Bhutanese in the class. Drona commented:

> Manju sits in front of me and Chakra sits at the back. We meet almost every day. We are Christians. I usually chat with them both inside and outside the classroom. We share more affection. We share with each other our personal problems as well. Chakra calls me 'son-in-law'. So I shouldn't make fun with him speaking English. I speak with him in Nepali in a respectful manner. But I occasionally chat in English with Manju and it will be fun. I feel more comfortable with her. She is like a friend.

For Drona, the choice of language for intra-ethnic communication, whether English or Nepali, was influenced by his social relationships with the status of the Bhutanese involved in the interactions (intimacy/distance and equality/inequality). Because Drona considered Chakra as a person to be respected, and speaking Nepali was a way of showing that respect, he always used Nepali when conversing with Chakra. On the contrary, Drona considered Manju as someone of equal social status i.e. "like a friend"; thus he felt comfortable speaking to her in English.

5.3 Whole-Class Discussion

The Bhutanese learners' reluctance to speak in English was evident in all types of discussions involving the whole class. The majority of the students did not tend to speak in such discussions except when Peter called on them by name to respond to his questions. Out of a total of 254 turns (4770 words) produced in six different whole-class discussions, ten Bhutanese learners took only 21 turns altogether and produced only 139 words. In contrast, the other ten non-Bhutanese learners took 110 turns altogether (1282 words) and Peter alone took 123 turns (3467 words). During the interview, Peter confirmed that the Bhutanese learners appeared "shy and reluctant to express things" even though he constantly encouraged them to speak.

Many respondents attributed their reluctance to speak in these discussions to their perceived fear of being criticized and their sense of hesitation and shyness. Drona remained completely silent during all discussions involving the whole class. When asked why he did not participate verbally, Drona reported that he felt it to be "quite awkward" to speak in front of other students due to his limited command of spoken English. He feared that it would be

"embarrassing" in front of his peers if he "get stuck" or "get lost for proper words" when speaking to the whole class. Although Drona was aware that he should be vocal in order to improve his spoken English, he found it very difficult to summon up the courage to speak. He stated "Sometimes I feel that I should try. But it is very hard to change the habit. In Nepali culture, we have a saying – why bother to take other's habit and give up one's own habit".

Likewise, Puja produced only one single word during these discussions. Her fear of being criticized for her English ability also impeded her from being vocal in front of the class. Puja explained, "I feel I should try to speak. But Bhutanese have a habit to insult others. So when I speak, they will insult me and make bad comments about my English. They tell me, you make mistake… and they laugh". Hence, Puja remained mostly silent because she wanted to protect herself from being criticized and to avoid being made fun of by her peers.

5.4 Familiarity and Cross-Ethnic Socialization

With regard to cross-ethnic social interactions by the Bhutanese, I constantly observed them having more interactions with Sudanese and Korean students than with Afghan students. They were less likely to make social contact with Afghan students except when Peter asked them to do so. Manju, Puja and Kumari repeatedly engaged in friendly conversation with Lee, a Korean female who was seated in the same row as them. Likewise, these Bhutanese females were also observed holding enjoyable and extended conversations with Osman, a Sudanese male who sat in the second row behind them. However, they were rarely observed socializing with the four Afghan students, Zahir, Farhad, Kabir and Fatima, who sat across the aisle to their left. Additionally, I never saw the Bhutanese females interacting with Shaina, a Filipina who occasionally sat in the second row next to Osman.

Manju pointed out in her interview that her everyday social contact with Osman outside of the classroom, such as at the shopping centre and within her community, made her

feel more comfortable about socializing with him in the classroom. For Manju, familiarity was more important than gender identity with respect to her interactions with students of other ethnicity. She stated "All we Bhutanese live in Mowbray, Newnham or Invermay but the Afghans live in Launceston city. So we do not have conversation with them outside. But we often meet Africans at shopping centre and some of them are our neighbours".

Likewise, Manju also viewed her relationship with Lee as not just a classmate but, more importantly, as a "religious friend". She reported that, because they were both Christians and attended the same church, she had a strong sense of intimacy with Lee. Manju indicated that she felt comfortable speaking English with Lee in the classroom, saying "I speak with Lee a lot because of the church. We both go to the Brighton church. We talk about the Bible. We also share about what program is going to be held in Brighton".

Like Manju, Puja also stressed the importance of familiarity for her cross-ethnic social interactions. Puja reported that she spent more time in the classroom socializing with Lee than with the Afghan students because Lee was considered an old friend; they had both studied together in the same class for more than a year.

Furthermore, although Puja referred to herself as a shy woman, she looked more relaxed and confident when she worked with Sayed, a young Sudanese boy. She tended to initiate the conversation and actively contributed her opinion when she was put in a pair with Sayed. On one occasion I saw Puja making funny jokes in English during the discussion with Sayed, something she did very rarely during such group discussions. On being asked why she was comfortable speaking with Sayed, she told me that "Sayed lives nearby to my father's house. When I go there, we keep on speaking".

Likewise, the three Bhutanese boys, Tek, Bhim and Karna, also had enjoyable and informal conversations with Sayed quite often. Sayed frequently came up to their desk and talked to them in a very informal manner. This is shown in the following observation:

> During a writing activity, Peter was assisting individual students with their writing tasks. After some minutes Sayed walked towards Narad and Karna who were seated together in the last row. Narad was reading a book entitled 'Living in Australia'. Pointing to Narad, Sayed mocked humorously, "He studies very hard". Karna shouted at Sayed "Okay, you go. Go!" Sayed replied, "What?" Karna continued "Are you deaf man"? Sayed then said "No worries, man". After a while Karna and Sayed went out together. Although they sounded quite aggressive the way they expressed themselves to each other, in actuality they were just bantering.

It was evident that the three Bhutanese boys had a much closer social connection with Sayed than with any other students of different ethnicity. However, like the Bhutanese women, the Bhutanese boys were never found interacting with the Afghan students except when Peter asked them to do so.

Drona, the oldest Bhutanese man in the class, always sat in the second row next to Osman who was a Sudanese man of similar age. Drona and Osman often engaged in informal conversations during the class and also helped each other with their academic tasks. Drona reported in the interview that he considered Osman as his "old friend" since "we studied together in level II and also meet at Church"; thus Drona felt comfortable speaking with him in class. On the contrary, I never saw Drona socializing with the Afghan students who were seated across the aisle to his left. Drona attributed his limited social contact with Afghans to the fact that they also had their own well-established ethnic network.

Bhutanese interviewees also pointed out that variation in accents amongst different ethnic groups also influenced their cross-ethnic socializations. They reported that all the Afghans they had encountered spoke with a different type of accent which they found very difficult to understand. On the contrary, they indicated that because the Sudanese and Bhutanese shared a similar interaction style, it made the Sudanese students' English easier to understand. Accordingly, they felt more comfortable conversing with Sudanese than with Afghans.

Tek indicated that he preferred to have a Sudanese in his discussion group over an Afghan because he felt that the Bhutanese and Sudanese shared a "similar interaction style".

He felt that they could “understand each other’s accent easily” and therefore “explain something clearly” to the other.

Like Tek, Manju also found it difficult to understand the Afghans’ spoken English. She reported that the difference in the speaking rates between Bhutanese and Afghan students created difficulty for understanding one another’s oral English. Manju felt that the Bhutanese students spoke relatively faster than the Afghans and indicated that this sometimes created a misunderstanding when having an interaction with them.

5.5 Mismatch in Teaching and Learning Styles

Peter described his classroom as a “global village of learning” where there were “no barriers or borders between people in terms of race, religion, and nationality”. He strongly resisted the attitude of segregating people according to their race: “I don’t like to say you’re Bhutanese and I’m Nepali, there is the fence”. Peter indicated that his class had only one rule and that was “no racist behaviour to anyone in the class”.

Peter reported that teaching migrant students in the AMEP class was different from teaching children in a high school. In his role of a migrant English teacher, Peter positioned himself as an individual with multiple identities - such as psychologist, friend, brother, adviser - each depending on the mood and/or need of his students.

Peter expressed his commitment for an inclusive class in which the individual backgrounds of his students, and their past experiences, were taken into high consideration within his curricular priorities. Peter constantly encouraged his students to voice their opinions, not only about the subject matter but also about the class as a whole. For example, on one occasion he invited the students to share their individual ideas about what could be done, as a class, which would be beneficial for each other’s learning as well as for their own. Ahmad, an Afghan student, responded that he would tell a joke every day. He then shared a joke and the whole class burst into laughter.

Peter also encouraged students to take responsibility for their own learning by stating, "I say, don't just do what I say. You have to be independent". He encouraged them to discover ways to learn and to plan and organize their own learning. The autonomy that Peter envisioned for his students was that they not only take responsibility of their own learning in the classroom, but that they also embraced self-reliant strategies in their everyday life. He stated "What we always say to them a lot is that you've gotta go out and find the opportunities. They won't come to you".

The classroom practices consistently reflected Peter's beliefs about teaching and learning. He created a friendly and informal relationship with his students. He always smiled as he entered the classroom and created an agreeable atmosphere by telling them funny jokes. He would share his own personal stories with them and would sometimes sit informally on a student's desk. Students were free to choose their seats when they entered the classroom and to leave the class without seeking Peter's permission. Students were rarely interrupted even when Peter caught them at playing video games or checking their Facebook page on their mobile phones. He also allowed students to speak softly to each other in their native language during class. Peter perhaps wanted his students to take responsibility for deciding whether or not, and the extent to which, they should seek bilingual support during cooperative learning environment. Occasionally, when the Afghan and Bhutanese students spoke loudly in their own language, Peter would look at me with an expression of frustration; however he did not tend to publicly reproach them for this.

Contrary to Peter's perceptions, the Bhutanese students who had previously experienced a strict academic environment in refugee schools indicated that they felt it difficult to cope with his casual style of teaching. The interviewees reported that they experienced too much freedom in Peter's class. Drona reported that the overwhelming freedom offered by the teacher made him "very lazy" towards his studies and that this

resulted in a slowing of his progress in learning English. Like Drona, Puja also indicated that because Peter did not impose any serious consequences for not doing the classroom tasks, she was less inclined to take her learning seriously. She said, "If we don't do class work, Peter says nothing, just tell us: do it. That's why we say: let it be". Although Manju was generally satisfied with Peter's style of teaching, she also felt that she had been less serious about learning English due to Peter's friendly, non-authoritarian style of behaviour to his students.

The observation data supports what the interviewees said with regard to their lack of self-determination in academic learning. Some Bhutanese students were frequently late to class and some, especially the males, often went out for a smoke during the class. Additionally, most Bhutanese students tended to spend a great deal of time checking their Facebook page on mobile phones during class time.

At the time of his interview, Peter also confirmed that some Bhutanese were less inclined to embrace his style of teaching despite his efforts to try and engage them and to help them become more motivated. He said "I have done everything that I possibly can, including having a volunteer. But they still don't get it". Peter pointed out that some Bhutanese learners considered the teacher to be someone to be esteemed and who has full authority; they therefore hesitated to question the teacher. The observation data also indicates that the Bhutanese students were less inclined to participate in interactions with Peter and thus the frequency of their interactions with him was relatively very low. The following excerpt illustrates this:

> In a writing activity, Peter sat in the chair at the front facing his students. The students who had already finished their tasks were either using their mobile phones or chatting with someone sitting next to them. The three Bhutanese females (Manju, Puja and Kumari) and the Korean female (Lee) were seated in the front row and all had finished their tasks. The physical closeness of all the women to where Peter sat gave them an equal opportunity to participate in social conversation with him. Lee initiated a chat with Peter and asked a lot of questions about his family, his teaching background and about Australian culture. She also shared some things with him from her own traditional background, including the roles of family members within her culture. They talked to each other for about ten minutes. During this time none of the

> three Bhutanese women contributed a single word to this conversation. They just listened passively and sometimes laughed at Peter's jokes.

Drona believed that students should fear their teachers in order to obtain better academic achievements. He asserted that "If there is no fear of the teacher, then that class will be negligible". Similarly, Puja expressed her beliefs that teachers should be strict with their students and that punishment was sometimes necessary to make the students study harder. Puja claimed that, if the teacher exerted some punishment system in the AMEP class, the students would automatically become more engaged in their learning tasks due to the fear of being punished. Puja held these paradoxical beliefs because she had been accustomed to learning in a strict academic environment since childhood. She explained that her teachers in the refugee camp used to beat their students if they did not complete their tasks properly and that students were forced to do their tasks even if they did not know the subject matter.

In addition, the interviewees expressed their dissatisfaction that Peter did not give them homework. When asked to express the things that he did not like about AMEP, Tek told me that "They didn't give homework. I did not like it". Like Tek, Manju also expressed the desire to have Peter give her homework every day so that she could practise her English at home.

5.6 Peer-Led Small Group Discussion

Group discussion was one of the routine classroom practices in the intermediate class. Peter put the students into groups of three or four and engaged them in discussions. The students had to share their opinions, arguments, and experiences on various social issues such as banning cigarettes, health and health effects, the power of business and advertising, and whether graffiti was street art or vandalism. Before these discussions, the students were familiarized with the topics by reading relevant materials, doing quiz activities, and by discussing these topics with the whole class.

For the group discussions, one student was assigned to the role of group leader. Peter believed that giving the additional responsibility of group leader to a particular student was very important because it can help to build their confidence. He stated "It means they can then engage with their classmates more... and they earn respect from their classmates as well". Although Peter told me that he would rotate leadership duties among different group members, I only saw the groups working constantly with the same leaders throughout the observation period.

The Bhutanese students concurred with Peter regarding the importance of group discussions for creating a cohesive learning atmosphere. The interviewees also reported that they felt more comfortable speaking English in a small group rather than in a whole-class situation. As Tek commented, "I liked the group discussion very much. We had to share with friends about a topic. It was less fearful than speaking in a whole group. Doing research with friends about a topic, sharing ideas, and drawing conclusions together".

Although Bhutanese students felt relatively less fearful when they spoke in small groups, their oral participation in the discussions was influenced by the structure of the relationships between the individuals within the group. The following provides a detailed description of how Drona felt marginalized in such discussions due to an unequal power relationship between himself and his group leader.

Two Bhutanese males, Drona and Bhim, were put together into a discussion group with Shaina, an outspoken Filipina student. This group's discussions were always led by Shaina during the month of my observation. Shaina was a talkative and socially confident female aged in her late 40s. On the contrary, Drona usually remained quiet in class. In the interview, Drona told me that Shaina was married to an Anglo-Australian and therefore she had more opportunities than he did to practise English in everyday social life. Additionally, despite the fact that Drona and Shaina usually sat in the same row during class, I never

observed Drona talking to Shaina except during his academic interactions during their group discussions.

During the group discussions, Shaina and Bhim often sat next to each other in the same row but Drona usually sat in a separate row facing them. Their seating positions created a more physical closeness between Shaina and Bhim than with Drona. Both Shaina and Bhim had a relaxed body language and repeatedly looked at each other when talking. Conversely, Drona often seemed reluctant to maintain eye contact with Shaina.

Drona considered Shaina, while in the role of group leader, to be someone superior to him with all the power to control and organize the discussions of their group. In the interview, he reported that Shaina was "just like another teacher" whose responsibility in the group was to explain and make the study material clear and understandable. In contrast, Drona considered his role as a group member was to provide "the answers to questions asked by Shaina".

Drona's perception about the roles of a leader versus a group member was reflected during their group discussions. His participation in these discussions was relatively minimal compared to Shaina and Bhim in terms of the total turns taken and the number of words spoken by each. For example, out of the total 166 turns (2509 words) taken altogether in a group discussion about 'smoking and health effects', Drona took only 15 turns, producing 274 words. In contrast, Shaina took 86 turns (1790 words) and Bhim took 65 turns (445 words).

Like any traditional teacher-led whole-class discussions, the discussions of this group were always initiated by the group leader. Participation followed a sequence of leader-member-leader-member pattern, and the turn distribution was usually controlled by the leader. The following excerpt illustrates this:

1 Shaina: Where is your group?
2 Drona: This is our group and you are our group leader.

3 Shaina: Oh, yeah. Sorry.
4 Drona: Okay. No worries.
5 Shaina: All right. Bhim and Drona?
6 Drona: Yeah.
7 Shaina: Good morning guys.
8 Bhim and Drona: Good morning.
9 Shaina: Yesterday we were writing to our friend about the danger of smoking cigarettes and what happen to you quitting from being smoking (gazing at Bhim).
10 Bhim: Hmm if he or she did smoking cigarette, he may cause from a lung cancer.
11 Shaina: Yeah. Okay. What thing did you say to your friend?
12 Bhim: Hmm I think.
13 Shaina: Because you were writing to your friend. So what did you say to your friend in your letter?
14 Bhim: I think some suggestion for quitting smoking cigarettes.
15 Shaina: How did you tell friend in polite way (gazing at Bhim)
16 Bhim: In our culture we will invite him for a dinner.
17 Shaina: Yes
18 Bhim: We will give him some suggestion like this smoking cause a lung cancer.
19 Shaina: Yeah. Very good. Hi, Drona …

As shown in the above excerpt, Shaina reserved the right to self-select herself as the initiator of the discussion because she was the group leader. Moreover, Drona's response as "you are our group leader" (Turn 2) was a reaction that reinforced Shaina's identity as someone more powerful than the other group members. The above excerpt also showed that Shaina totally controlled the turn-taking procedure during the discussion. For example, she formally initiated the discussion in Turn 7, introduced the discussion topic in Turn 9 and asked Bhim for his opinion in Turn 11. Furthermore, the sequence of interactions in the discussion was either Shaina-Drona-Shaina-Drona or Shaina-Bhim-Shaina-Bhim. In both types of interaction patterns, Shaina appeared as the addressee of all the utterances produced by Drona and Bhim.

Additionally, the turn-taking patterns often followed the initiation-response-feedback (IRF) formula in which Shaina initiated the turn sequence, Drona or Bhim gave a response, and then Shaina offered them feedback. For example, at Turn 15 Shaina asked a question of the group ("how did you tell him in polite?") but nominated Bhim for a response by gazing at him. Bhim referred to his cultural knowledge in Turn 16 when giving his response. At Turn

19, Shaina offered Bhim positive feedback ("very good") and then nominated Drona as the next speaker by calling his name. It indicated that Drona's right of participation was controlled by Shaina.

When I asked Drona why his oral participation in the group discussion was very limited, he pointed out that he felt marginalized by his limited command of English compared with Shaina. He further explained "Because her English was a bit better, she could dominate the discussion. Could dominate me, could dominate Bhim. Also, I don't want to overtake her because of leader and also because of culture".

The unequal power relationship between Drona and Shaina not only gave Shaina all the power to control the turn-taking procedure, but she also frequently seized Drona's right of discourse by interrupting him. This is shown in the following excerpt:

1 Shaina: Are you a smoker (pointing out to Drona)?
2 Drona: No. But
3 Shaina: Yeah. So.
4 Drona: I know about smoking, what it will do, so I
5 Shaina: Now I have an idea.
6 Drona: I stop smoking about two
7 Shaina: Two years ago.
8 Drona: Yes.
9 Shaina: Okay.

In the above excerpt, Shaina used an I-R-F formula. She asked the initial question ("Are you a smoker?") and selected Drona by pointing to him to respond to her question. The overlapping turns took place from Turn 2 to Turn 8 between Drona and Shaina when both attempted to grab the floor by talking over each other. After Drona's minimal "No, but", Shaina tried to jump in at Turn 3. Drona resisted her and, in order to complete his statement, he uttered "I know about smoking, what it will do, so I" (Turn 4). Before he could finish his answer, Shaina interrupted Drona at Turn 5 and attempted to switch the topic. At Turn 6, Drona reasserted himself and uttered "I stop smoking about two" but he still could not finish his answer; once again Shaina took over and spoke for him ("two years ago") to complete his

answer. Finally, Drona capitulated to Shaina with a minimal “yes” at Turn 8. Drona did not resist being marginalized during the discussion due to the fact that he felt inferior to Shaina with respect to his identity as a group member.

This chapter provided an ethnographic description of language learning experiences of Bhutanese students in the intermediate English class. The next chapter details the language learning and integration experiences of Bhutanese Christians in a multi-ethnic Australian church.

Chapter 6

Brighton Church Visit

6.1 Background

In this chapter, I will describe in detail the social, cultural and linguistic participation of Bhutanese Christian refugees in a local English-medium church from the perspectives of intercultural interactions, language learning and integration into a new society. The information used is derived from my observations at the Brighton church and from interviews with the Christian Bhutanese and the coordinator of the church.

When I entered the church building on my first visit, Birkha, a Nepali-speaking church pastor, guided me down to the auditorium. The large auditorium was set up in three rows – one big row in the middle and two smaller rows on either side against the wall. The rows were separated by two aisles leading to the podium at the front. The auditorium had white walls, dark blue pin dot carpets on the floor and a white ceiling with bright lights. Musical instruments, such as a drum set, keyboard, guitar and piano, were set up on the first half of the podium. There was a large display screen at the front suspended about six feet above the podium and two smaller screens set on either side against the wall. The screens displayed various announcements, notices, songs, Biblical texts, and hymns in English.

Multi-ethnic inclusiveness was an important strength of the Brighton church. The participants represented different ethnic groups including Anglo-Australians, Bhutanese, Burmese, Chinese, Sudanese, Thai and Vietnamese. The largest group was Anglo-Australian and the second largest was Bhutanese. On my first visit, out of a total of 150 attendees, 75 were Anglo-Australians and 40 were Bhutanese.

Paul, an English-speaking church coordinator, claimed that all individuals, irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds, could find acceptance and inclusion in the Brighton

Baptist Church. The following extract detailed Paul's views on the multicultural nature of the church:

> Our church has always been a welcoming church. One of the difficulties, I think, in feeling at home in a church is that if you're the only Asian in the church you can feel a bit strange. But because we have other ethnic groups in the church, they feel more at home here. In some churches I could go to, nobody would speak to me. But when somebody comes to our church we want to be a friend to them. It's the teaching of this church… it's our path.

6.2 The Bhutanese Congregants

Pastor Birkha advised me that approximately 70 Bhutanese from 30 different households attended the Brighton church every Sunday. The Bhutanese attendees represented all age groups including children, teens, middle-aged and the elderly. Their social class could be identified by their surnames; these names confirmed that nearly all the Bhutanese belonged to the *Rai* or *Biswa* castes which are the so-called lower caste in the hierarchy of the Nepali-Bhutanese class system.

Paul mentioned that the Bhutanese congregants began coming to the Brighton church in early 2009. The first Bhutanese family who came to the church was a *Biswa* family. Later, more Bhutanese also joined the church as many more began arriving in Tasmania from the refugee camps of Nepal.

Nearly all the Bhutanese were originally either Hindus or Kirat (ethnic religions). Some Bhutanese converted to Christianity after they came to Australia while others had already embraced Christianity in the Nepalese refugee camps. They had different personal and/or social reasons for their conversion to Christianity. For example, Pastor Birkha became attracted to Christianity when his friends in the refugee camp told him about the principles of the Bible. Unlike Birkha, Raju converted to Christianity after he came to Australia. Raju, another learner of English in the AMEP class, was a strict Hindu in Nepal. However, after he immigrated to Australia he found it very difficult to find Hindu priests from his caste living in his area; thus he felt compelled to change his religion.

6.3 English Worship Services

Most Bhutanese congregants seemed to attend two worship services at the Brighton church every Sunday - one in the morning and another in the afternoon. The activities in the morning service were conducted in English and included singing, announcing and preaching. Consequently, the Bhutanese congregants referred to this service as English church. On the contrary, the afternoon service was an ethnic-specific worship service designated especially for Nepali-speaking Bhutanese. Thus, the attendees of the afternoon service were composed of only Bhutanese.

The morning service was significant for the Bhutanese in their learning of English. It offered them a great exposure to the target language in various ways such as through songs, preaching, announcements and social interactions. It helped them to sharpen their aural-oral skills in English because they heard the songs and preaching in English and participated in social interactions with English-speaking people. Although speaking in Nepali amongst themselves was not strictly prohibited during the morning service, they had a moral obligation to avoid using Nepali in the presence of other congregants who were not Bhutanese. Pastor Birkha commented, "When we get there (for the morning service), we are not supposed to speak Nepali. So it has become an obligation for us to speak English. Plus it's a good opportunity for us to learn English".

Two core activities (singing and preaching) took up most of the time at the morning service. During the singing portion of the service, the song leaders along with other congregants sang a number of different songs that had religious messages in English. The song leaders were mostly English-speaking people. However, a few young Bhutanese also sometimes appeared on the podium in the role of lead singers. On my first visit, two Bhutanese boys in their early 20's appeared on stage and led the congregation in many

different songs such as ‘Blessed Be Your Name’, ‘In The Land That Is Plentiful’, ‘Jesus All For Jesus’ and ‘All I Am And Have And Ever Hope To Be’.

Preaching was another routine activity of the morning worship service. All preachers were native English-speaking males who were usually dressed in suits and ties. I never saw any Bhutanese delivering the sermons at the morning service. Pastor Birkha explained that Bhutanese could not perform this task because they did not have adequate proficiency in English.

6.3.1 The struggles of non-English speaking Bhutanese

During the worship singing, the words of the (English) songs were projected onto the large screens on either side of the stage. The congregants who were new to the songs tended to follow the projected words on these screens. However many Bhutanese, especially the middle-aged and elderly, could not read the English words on the screens; therefore most of these people simply hummed while other congregants sang the songs.

Similarly when the English-speaking preacher preached the Biblical stories, the relevant texts were displayed onto the screens. All the congregants remained largely silent throughout the long periods of preaching. Sometimes the congregation burst into laughter when the preacher told funny jokes however a lot of Bhutanese could not join in with this laughter due to insufficient understanding of the preacher’s English.

Some Bhutanese felt bored because of the long preaching. On my second visit I heard a Bhutanese male whispering to his co-ethnic friend in Nepali, “a very long speech”. The woman nodded her head in agreement. In the interview, Pastor Birkha explained that many Bhutanese, especially the older people, did tend to feel bored because they could not understand the English sermon.

Some Bhutanese with very limited proficiency in English expressed their frustration at not being able to understand the preaching and worship songs during the morning service.

Mohan, a 30-year-old Bhutanese male, talked to me about his feelings of being disconnected and disengaged due to his lack of knowledge in English:

Interviewer: Do you understand the worship songs and preaching in English?
Mohan: No. Not at all. How can an illiterate person like me understand this! I feel very lazy, sitting here like a statue and then going home. If I could understand English it would be interesting to listen to what was being said. But I can't. It has been four years since I came here but I can't speak English yet.

Despite the fact that many Bhutanese did not understand English sermons and songs, they still participated in the morning service and thus became a part of the multi-ethnic Christian community. On my second visit I saw an 85-year-old Bhutanese female attending the service; she could not even walk without the aid of her stick but spent the entire two and half hours in the church. Pastor Birkha attributed the desire of non-English speaking Bhutanese for attending the morning service despite their lack of the English language, due to their religious belief in Christianity. He explained that most Bhutanese congregants had "a strong faith in Jesus".

6.3.2 English songs and preaching – tools for enhancing literacy

Some respondents reported that their regular exposure to the English language through songs, preaching and Bible reading was beneficial for improving their literacy and comprehension skills. I often saw Raju actively participating in the activities of the morning service. Several times I observed him singing worship songs together with the English-speaking congregants and actively listening to the sermons delivered by the native English speakers. In the interview, Raju mentioned that he could now partly understand the content of Biblical texts, songs and preaching. Raju reported that his active participation during these activities helped him to enhance his English literacy and comprehension skills. According to Raju, an active participation involves giving full attention to the preacher and trying to make sense of the message by taking heed of the nonverbal cues used by the preacher. Raju explained:

Interviewer: How did you improve your comprehension skills?
Raju: I became curious, bit by bit, by listening to the stories about Jesus. The story gradually became interesting. I became curious to hear what will happen next when listening to the story. If you just sit there but do not concentrate, then you feel lazy. But if you actively participate, if you fully give your attention… and if you try to understand looking at their mouth and their gestures, you can at least understand something.

I also saw Mira, a middle-aged Bhutanese female, reading through a Nepali Bible book when the preacher was delivering the sermon in English. While the English-speaking preacher read out the Bible text to the congregants, Mira took out a thick pocket-sized Nepali Bible and read the same verse silently. Sometimes Mira glanced up and attempted to follow the projected English words on the screen. When the preacher elaborated on the story, Mira listened to him attentively. In this sense, the Nepali bible can be viewed as a scaffolding tool for Mira as it helped to enhance her comprehension of the English text.

6.4 Social Interaction with the Native English Speakers

Bhutanese respondents mentioned that the Brighton church was one of the few places where they had access to English-speaking people and opportunities to practise their English oral communication skills. Pastor Birkha pointed out that the Bhutanese who had regular contact with the English-speaking church members had made more progress in their learning of English than those who only studied it in the AMEP class.

In the morning service, the interactions between Bhutanese and English-speaking church members usually took place in two major contexts – one before the worship service and one during the morning tea. In these situations the English-speaking congregants tended to talk to the Bhutanese about their personal and family backgrounds mostly, such as their country of origin, their religious backgrounds, their family members, and their everyday life in Australia. Some Bhutanese had very routine and short exchanges while others had extended interactions.

Before the morning service commenced, a significant number of English-speaking families came to the hall some minutes early and then dispersed throughout the room and engaged in informal social interactions. Likewise, some Bhutanese families also came about 10 to 20 minutes before the service began. The Bhutanese who came earlier would also tend to sit in the front or middle pews, mixing in with native English speakers and other migrants. They were also the more likely to engage in social interactions with the English-speaking people. I will now provide a detailed description of the opportunities for English interactions at the Brighton church and the extent to which Bhutanese participants made use of these opportunities.

6.4.1 The social interactions of Raju and his family with native English speakers

Raju was highly motivated to participate in social interactions with the English speakers at the Brighton church and usually came some minutes early before the worship service began. Raju explained that his Christian identity impacted positively on his sense of belonging to the church and with its English-speaking members. He stressed that this religious connection gave him extra confidence to participate in social interactions with the natives. Raju commented:

> I feel like the church people belong to my community, my religion. I feel like they are good people. So I can speak with them more comfortably. They allow me to speak there. They don't say you are Nepalese, you can't speak here, and the church is ours. But I need to be able to explain it in English. When they speak English I also have to reply to them, no matter how poor my English is. So it helps me to increase my confidence. If I only go to the school but not to the church, I will not have had enough practice.

On my first visit, Raju arrived in the hall a few minutes early with his wife and their young daughter Binita. They sat side by side on the left side of the third row. After a short while, a white man of early forties came down the aisle and approached Raju's family with a cheerful face saying, "Morning, how are you?" Raju replied "I am good, thank you" with a slight smile on his face. The man then continued on.

A few minutes later, a white woman in her late fifties headed toward the family through the crowded aisle. She came close to them, leaned forward a little, smiled, and spoke very slowly, “Good morning. How are you? Nice to see you again”. Her voice was audible enough despite the background music. Both Raju and his wife gave her a big smile and replied together, “Good morning”. However, their daughter Binita gazed down in silence. Bending down slightly and maintaining eye contact, the woman asked Binita, “Six more weeks, then you finish school?” “Yeah... then we have summer holidays” Binita replied softly and blushed. The woman continued with “Which level do you go to?” and Binita replied “Primary school”. However, the woman did not understand what Binita said and her eyebrows were noticeably raised. After a two-second silence, Binita stated again “Primary school” raising her voice a bit louder. Their conversation then continued for a while as the woman kept asking a lot of questions of Binita.

In the interaction events described above, both Raju and his wife were unable to carry on extended conversations with the English-speaking people. They replied to the speakers with greetings but then remained silent. Raju attributed his limited contribution to the interactions due to the fact that they asked him “only very few things” and that he could not answer their “complex questions”. Regardless, Raju felt that hearing native speakers using English, and speaking to them with a few words of English, would gradually mature his own English-speaking ability.

In contrast, Binita who was relatively more proficient in English, had an extended conversation with the English-speaking woman due to the fact that the woman seemed to be more interested in interacting with her rather than with her parents. Although the presence of the native English speaker was a bit awkward for Binita at first, the woman’s cheerful face and her series of questions, gradually made her shyness disappear.

6.4.2 The morning-tea event: A context for speaking with native English speakers

The half-hour morning tea was another significant social event which offered the Bhutanese migrants a rich context for social interaction with native English speakers. Manju considered the morning tea event to be very beneficial for practising her English as she could meet and interact with people of different ethnicities there. She explained this as:

> After the worship, we have tea and snacks in the hall. All people go there. Australians are there, Chinese are there, Koreans are there, Burmese are there, and Africans are there. So I speak English with Burmese, Australians and other friends. I have much improved my English by regular practice with them.

However, not all Bhutanese who took part in the worship service attended this communicative event. A significant number of them went straight home after the service while some others remained in the parking lot waiting for someone to pick them up to go home.

Only a few Bhutanese seemed to attend the morning-tea event. It was held in another hall past the parking lot. Inside the hall, on a big table in the centre of the room, there were cups, milk, sugar, tea, coffee and plates of biscuits. The plastic chairs were dispersed around the room in no particular arrangement. On my first visit there were forty English-speaking people, ten Bhutanese and a few other migrants of different ethnicities in attendance. During this event, the attendees would have tea/coffee and snacks and participate in social interactions in informal groups or pairs.

6.4.2.1 Perceived or actual inability to speak with the native English speakers

Drona, a learner of English at the intermediate level, did not take part in the morning-tea event that could have offered him English-speaking opportunities. He usually stayed in the parking lot for a few minutes and then went home with his family. When asked why he did not attend this communicative event, Drona revealed his reluctance to take part in social conversations with native English speakers because of his perceived inability to speak English. He explained:

> They try to initiate the conversation with me. They are interested to talk to us. But I try to avoid having to speak with them. I feel good if they don't ask me a question because I don't have to speak English, twisting my tongue. I feel difficult to speak English with them because I have a feeling that I am at zero level of English.

Although Drona was a fairly competent speaker of English in the AMEP class, he felt that his English was at "zero level" when speaking with native English speakers in a natural setting. Consequently, it was his own perceived inability that prevented Drona from talking to native English speakers.

During my visits, I saw only a few middle-aged and elderly Bhutanese attending the morning tea. I saw Narayan, a middle-aged Bhutanese male, sitting on a chair with a cup of tea in his hand. After a few minutes an English-speaking man walked towards Narayan and said, "Hello, Narayan. How are you?" The man put his hand out for a handshake. Narayan then gave the man a firm hand shake and replied in a low voice with "Hello". The man continued, "Are you happy coming to the church?" Narayan looked confused for a moment, probably due to not understanding what the man had asked of him. He then gave a big smile but could not answer the question. After a few seconds of awkward silence, the man said "Okay. Have a good day". Therefore, despite the fact that Narayan had the opportunity to practise his oral English with a native English speaker, it was his lack of ability in English that impeded him from taking part in a meaningful conversation.

6.4.2.2 Young Bhutanese and their extended conversations

During the morning-tea event I saw five young Bhutanese, three boys and two girls, sitting on chairs in a circle. I also saw a young white man within their group. They talked to each other in English and sometimes laughed very loudly. All the Bhutanese in this group spoke with a very good English accent and actively participated in the conversation.

Similarly, Bimal was a socially active young Bhutanese male who was also a youth volunteer and a co-worship leader in the church. On my third visit to the church, I saw Bimal

in the car park after the worship service. I then followed him around to explore his socialization with other English-speaking people.

At the parking lot on the other side of the main building, Bimal saw a white man who was selling ice-cream from his cart and called out, “Hey, John. How are you?” The ice-cream vendor gave Bimal a quick glance and greeted back, “Hey, Bimal”. Bimal walked over to the vendor and said, “Selling ice-cream? This is good, no?” and the vendor replied. Their conversation continued for some time with Bimal asking the vendor a few more questions about ice-cream making techniques. In his interview Bimal told me that, although he had felt shy about speaking with native English speakers at first, his shyness gradually disappeared as he kept interacting with them over an extended period of time.

6.5 Social and Cultural Functions of the Church

Brighton church was not merely a place for religious worship, it was also a provider of material and emotional support to its members. Bhutanese congregants had access to a range of support services through the social networks they had established at the church. The interviewees cited examples of a range of volunteer services provided by Anglophone church members; these included teaching individuals how to drive, assisting them to obtain a driver’s license, providing English language support, giving them a ride to the hospital, and more. Raju recalled:

> The church volunteers help us in our basic needs for settlement, such as learning to drive a car, learning English, and community orientation. During the first few months they come to visit the new arrivals every week and support them in speaking English, learning about the Australian community, visiting government offices, visiting the hospital and the shopping centre.

These services were especially important for the newly-arrived Bhutanese in the early stage of their settlement. The newcomer refugees obtained these services through informal channels and the service providers were the volunteer workers who were familiar with the local environment.

Many Bhutanese expressed their gratitude to the Anglo-Australian church volunteers who treated them with kindness. They mentioned that the people in the church were very friendly and always willing to help migrants. Manju stated, "We are completely strangers here. We came to their country. But they love us so much. It makes me feel internally happy". The welcoming and inclusive environment they received from the church members increased their sense of belonging and social connectedness to the wider community.

Respondents also reported that the Brighton church helped them to learn many aspects of Australian culture. The church served as a social link that helped to connect Bhutanese with members of mainstream Australian society. Thus, this connection was beneficial for Bhutanese to understand and acquire mainstream Australian culture. Pastor Birkha remarked, "We're learning many things from the English-speaking church members such as how they cook food, how they serve food, how they eat, their other manners and etiquette". In this sense, the church was the medium through which the Bhutanese experienced Australian culture and religion.

In this chapter, I have described the intercultural participation, social networks and informal English language-learning of Bhutanese Christians in a multicultural church environment. In the next chapter, I will provide a detailed description of Harka, an old Hindu Bhutanese male, with particular attention to his socialization and integration experiences within and outside his community.

Chapter 7

A Case Study of a Hindu Bhutanese

7.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a description of the lived experience of an old Hindu Bhutanese, Harka, with particular reference to issues concerning social networks, language socialization and cultural integration. The information used in this chapter is derived from my home visit and from the interview with him.

Harka was a Hindu Bhutanese male who was born in Bhutan in 1959. He lived in his native land for 33 years before fleeing to Nepal with his family, leaving behind all his property and land. He had spent 19 years in a Nepalese refugee camp before immigrating to Australia in 2009 with his wife and four grown-up children, two boys and one girl. After living for four years in Australia, Harka became a naturalized Australian citizen in late 2013. Harka was Brahmin by caste and a very strict Hindu.

Despite financial hardship and uncertainty over his children's future, Harka was personally happy with his life in the Nepalese refugee camp where he could fully practise his religion and culture. He felt a strong sense of community there and initially had no desire to immigrate to any other country offering permanent resettlement. However, he later decided to come to Australia hoping for a brighter future for his children. Harka's primary motivation for coming to Australia was mainly associated with economic advantages for his children rather than for himself.

Harka was illiterate in his native language and he knew no English before immigrating to Australia. Like many other Bhutanese of his age, Harka never went to school in Bhutan because he had to work on the family farm; thus he did not have time for schooling. A refugee-based organization had offered an adult literacy class in the Nepalese

refugee camp but Harka did not attend because he had to work to provide extra money for his family in order to supplement the food provided by the UN agency.

Soon after his arrival in Australia, Harka joined the AMEP in TAFE but was unable to continue after some time due to his chronic back pain. Harka then acquired access to the English home tutoring scheme, a government-funded program which provided English language support to refugees who were unable to participate in classroom-based instructions. However, Harka claimed that his English language learning through home tutoring was not so effective because of his inability to understand his English-speaking tutor's utterances. Because he and his tutor could not understand each other's native languages, Harka found it extremely difficult to communicate with him and understand the words and the word structure his tutor uttered. Although Harka's daughter-in-law sometimes served as an interpreter between Harka and his tutor, she was not always readily available for this.

7.2 Family Network and Support

After arriving in Australia, Harka lived with his extended family including his wife, one married son, daughter-in-law, two grandsons, one unmarried son and one unmarried daughter. The family rented a six-bedroom home in a peaceful, cosy suburb of Launceston where many other Bhutanese families also resided. Harka's eldest son started his own grocery store in the city after he completed the intermediate level of formal English instruction in Australia. Harka's youngest son worked as a taxi driver after completing high school in Australia and his daughter-in-law worked as a child-care assistant on a full-time basis. At the time of this interview, Harka's daughter had already got married and formed her own family in Australia. Harka and his wife spent much of their time at home doing the domestic chores. Harka had never made any effort to seek employment because he felt that it was too difficult for a non-English speaking person to obtain a job in Australia.

Because Harka's eldest son and his daughter-in-law had full-time employment, they did not have time to take care of their two little children (aged three and four). Therefore it was usually Harka and his wife who supervised and reared their grandchildren. Harka explained, "My two sons and daughter-in-law earn money for the whole family. So I and my wife provide support to the family by taking care of the grandchildren. This way, we can help each other". Harka believed that this kind of mutual support, between older parents and their adult children, was crucial in Australia in order to maintain family solidarity and to maximise the family's economy.

Although Harka was the family breadwinner in Bhutan and Nepal, he was dependent on his adult children for most aspects of his life after immigrating to Australia. He felt that he had inadequate English proficiency to perform any public tasks alone and he was therefore reliant on his children for shopping, transportation, interpretation, financial assistance and hospital visits. Harka explained:

> I don't have a job here and the allowance that the government gives us is not sufficient to survive. But my children work and support the family financially. I have to rely on my children. I can't do anything alone. Because I and my wife don't speak English, my children do the shopping for the family, fix any problems that occur and do all other public tasks. My daughter-in-law makes the hospital appointments when needed and takes me to the hospital. When I have to go to any public office like Centrelink or Service Tasmania, my children help me to deal with the Australians.

Harka spent some time each day in the small garden of his home. He grew some fruit and vegetables, cut the grass, watered the plants, and played with his grandsons in the backyard. Because Harka had been a farmer before fleeing Bhutan, he enjoyed being able to utilize his traditional farming knowledge and skills. Apart from this occasional cultivation work at his home, and the rearing of his grandchildren, Harka did not have any other routine tasks to complete. He spent most of his day sitting and nodding off unless someone from the Bhutanese community came to his home and engaged in social conversation.

7.3 Bhutanese Networks and Religious Practices

Harka maintained strong contacts with other Bhutanese families living in Tasmania. His youngest brother and his three sisters lived in a nearby suburb, about 15 km away from Harka's home. The families visited each other's homes almost every week and spent a great deal of time chatting, making tea and sometimes eating dinner together. Harka told me that he knew most Bhutanese families living in the area although he did not know many of them before coming to Australia.

Harka often invited his relatives and acquaintances to his home to celebrate ethnic rituals and festivals. He stated, "I don't know English. I don't know Australian culture. So chatting and socializing with other Bhutanese is the only way to spend time in Australia". In addition to this, Harka performed healing rituals as a traditional method of treating sick people; he was known within his Bhutanese community as a 'jhakri' (which translates to *Shaman*). A few sick Bhutanese who were frustrated by the Australian hospital-based treatment would come to his home hoping to get rid of evil spirits from their sick bodies.

Harka felt that having a strong Bhutanese community in Tasmania was beneficial for the observance and preservation of Hindu culture and ethnic identity. Harka strongly identified himself as a Hindu and continued to practise Hindu rituals in his everyday life. He enjoyed attending the weekend "kirtan" (Hindu chanting and praying) which was held at various Bhutanese homes on a rotating basis. About 40 Hindu Bhutanese from all over Northern Tasmania would regularly participate in two to three hours of Hindu's call-and-response chanting. Harka explained that holding such religious gatherings within the community helped to retain Hindu identity. It also taught the children about Hindu culture and traditions and about spending time with their gods. Besides this, Harka also performed his daily rituals at home by spending one hour every morning in worship, meditation and prayer. One small room of his house was solely devoted to the worship of Hindu deities.

Harka called this his "puja kotha*"* (worship room) and there were photographs and idols of Hindu deities placed around the walls and on an altar. On the other hand, Harka expressed his worry that more and more Hindu Bhutanese were being converted to Christianity after immigrating to Australia; he feared that the Australian Bhutanese community might completely lose their Hindu identity.

7.4 Insufficient Cultivation of Networks with English-Speaking Australians

Harka did not have any Anglo-Australian friends or acquaintances. He did not even know his Australian neighbours despite his five years residency in Australia. However he was aware of the fact that he had to mingle with English-speaking Australians in order to practise and acquire oral English. He stated, "I don't like culturally to get mixed up with the white people. But just to learn the language". Nevertheless, Harka felt that he did not have adequate English proficiency for communicating with English-speaking people, nor did he have access to the social contexts where he could make English-speaking Australian networks. He explained, "I don't have enough English to speak with the white people. I don't have any white friends with whom I could practise speaking English". As a consequence, Harka ended up spending his entire time within the Bhutanese community where he could get by without speaking English.

Harka acknowledged that his excessive reliance on his Bhutanese networks constrained his opportunities to expand into English-speaking networks. He was able to carry out his everyday tasks without speaking English or making any contact with native English speakers. Whenever he needed to deal with any public tasks, such as talking to staff at Centrelink, his family or community networks served as a direct or indirect interpreter for him. They were more proficient in English and were quite willing to assist him when needed. Nevertheless, although the Bhutanese community provided Harka with a great deal of support and companionship, he knew that his overreliance on them impeded him from developing

English-speaking Australian networks. It also impeded him from practising his oral English. Harka explained:

> If I and my wife were the only Nepali-speaking Bhutanese in this town, I would probably have improved my English a lot. If there were not a strong relationship within the Bhutanese community, and if there were not my children to help me, I would have to contact the Migrant Resource Centre myself for any difficulty. To ask anything of MRC, I have to speak English even if I do not know. But we have our own community here. That's why I feel more comfortable to ask a Bhutanese rather than the MRC. That's why it doesn't increase my English proficiency. But I always need another Bhutanese to speak on my behalf.

Harka's lack of social connection with English-speaking Australians was sharply linked to his feelings of isolation from Australian society. He said, "Sometimes I feel like I'm still in Nepal. I don't have any links with the Australians. I neither know their language nor do I have any Australian friends".

7.5 A Strong Sense of Nepali-Bhutanese Identity

Despite the fact that Harka was a naturalized Australian citizen, he did not identify himself as an Australian. Rather, Harka still considered himself to be a Nepali Bhutanese. He explained this as:

> I have got the citizenship but I do not feel like I am an Australian because I am a Nepali Bhutanese. If I had assimilated into the culture of this country and if I had made contact with the Australians, I would then have felt as an Australian. I neither practice the culture of this country, nor does the government of this country recognize my culture. How can I be an Australian!

Because of his strong sense of attachment to the Nepali culture, and to his Nepali Bhutanese identity, Harka neither appreciated the Australian culture nor wanted to embrace any aspects of this new way of life. Although Harka made a positive remark on the Australian standard of living, he did not consider himself as a member of Australian society. Harka indicated that his lack of proficiency in English and lack of Australian cultural knowledge perpetuated his strong sense of Nepali identity. He commented:

> The main thing for me is the English language. I have suffered a lot because of the lack of English. I can say that none of the Bhutanese who are of my age can feel like

> they are Australian. I would be happy if I can at least respond to the white people when they ask me "where are you going?" But I can't do that even.

Further, Harka believed that Australian society was influenced by the Christian faith and, therefore, that his conversion to Christianity was an essential condition to become a part of it. Regardless, because he self-identified as a Nepali Bhutanese, Harka continued to retain his Nepali way of life. Nepali was the only language spoken at home. Harka and his family always ate Nepali meals at home. He often watched Nepali religious preaching and Nepali news. Harka's Nepali identity was also displayed in his clothing. He always wore a special Nepali hat at home and outside. Additionally, Harka said that he wore a long, traditional Nepali costume during Nepali festivals and rituals.

Harka expressed his concern about the young Bhutanese in the community who had been assimilated into the Australian way of life. He believed that their quick assimilation was mainly due to the unlimited freedom they experienced in Australia. Harka was extremely unhappy with the teenager's lifestyle in Australia, especially about young girls wearing short skirts, boys drinking alcohol, and that teenagers can become boyfriend and girlfriend. He seemed to be very anxious about his own grandsons - that they might lose their ethnic identity and embrace the Australian way of life. Therefore, he and his family made special efforts to ensure that their children were socialized into the Nepali culture.

Because Harka's family wanted their children to be fully immersed in the Nepali language at home, they were reluctant to send them to a child care institution where English was the medium of communication. During my home visit, I saw several Nepali grammar and story books, CDs and other resources that were specifically designed for Nepali language learning. The children were adequately exposed to Nepali as their first language. I found that both his grandsons spoke Nepali very well but neither of them spoke English. Furthermore, Harka expressed his desire to send his grandsons to Nepal sometime in the future for their primary education.

Harka indicated that, because of his deep love of Nepal and his commitment to Nepali identity, he had a strong desire to return to Nepal for permanent settlement. He explained:

> Nepal is the holy land for us Nepalese. I still love Nepal so much. I always pray to my gods that I may release my *prana* (death) in the holy land where my father and mother have died. I will be happy there. I do hope I will go back to Nepal one day. I would rather eat once a day and wear second-hand clothes… because the culture is good in Nepal.

Given Harka's desire to return, his family also strengthened their ties to Nepal in various ways. In 2013, Harka's youngest son went to Nepal to marry a Nepali girl chosen by his family. Furthermore, Harka arranged for his older daughter's marriage to a Nepali boy who had come to Australia on a student visa. Furthermore, at Harka's special request, the family recently purchased a piece of land in Nepal where they want to build a house in the future.

Harka claimed that he would have a real sense of life in Nepal, more so than in Australia, despite the fact that he might need to struggle there for the basic necessities. Harka considered Nepal as his motherland where he could practise his rituals and traditions and where he would be immersed in his own language, culture and religion.

This chapter has explored the social network, language learning and integration experience of Harka within and outside his ethnic community. The next chapter will provide a detailed description of Hari, a young Bhutanese male, with particular attention to his linguistic socialization experience into his new workplace.

Chapter 8

A Case Study of Hari

8.1 Background

This chapter is particularly focussed on the experience and process of language socialization of a young Bhutanese man, Hari, in his workplace. The information used in this chapter is derived from his reflective journal entries and the interview with him.

Hari was 20 years old at the time of this study. He lived with his parents in a suburb close to the university in Launceston where many other Bhutanese lived, including his close relatives. Hari was the only child of the family. He was born in a Nepali refugee camp in 1994 and arrived in Australia in 2009.

Before arriving in Australia, Hari had completed grade 7 at the refugee school but he had acquired very little knowledge of English. It was Hari's parents who had made the decision to immigrate to Australia. Hari said he was happy with his Australian life mainly because "it is a very clean country and we can earn lots of money".

Hari's parents were in their late 40s. They did not have access to education in Bhutan or in Nepal but they had completed the 510 hours of AMEP after arriving in Australia. Regardless, Hari remarked that his parents did not make sufficient progress in learning English and always required an interpreter if they had to go to hospital or attend other public offices.

8.2 Formal English-Learning Experiences

Hari attended high-school education for one year in Australia and then studied in a college for two years. After completing grade 12, Hari attended an English language class at TAFE for six months. Despite his four years' exposure to English in formal classes in Australia, Hari still felt that his communicative competence in English was insufficient to ably converse with English speakers. He attributed his inadequate progress in learning

English to the overwhelming freedom he had experienced in Australian classrooms. Hari pointed to the difference in educational practices between Australia and the refugee camp in Nepal. He stressed that he used to show a great respect and obedience to his teachers in the refugee school and that he was used to studying very hard because of the fear of being punished by his Nepali teachers. Conversely, Hari felt that he was granted more power and freedom in the Australian classroom, and that he lacked a sense of responsibility for his own learning due to being unfamiliar with this. Hari wrote in his diary: "In Australia, the teacher did nothing even when we didn't go to school. I think the teachers should be strict with their students. We would have studied hard if we had feared them".

Nevertheless, Hari later regretted not studying hard at school when he started facing many challenges in the workplace due to his insufficient oral skills in English. He admitted, "When I started doing this job, I am in trouble. I couldn't understand their English".

8.3 Bhutanese as a Barrier to Learning English

Despite the fact that Hari became aware of the importance of developing his English in order to achieve a better life in Australia, he found that he had few opportunities to practise it after he left school. In the community where he lived, there were a large number of Bhutanese with whom he only spoke in Nepali. Although Hari attempted to practise speaking English with other young Bhutanese on a few occasions, he faced a hostile treatment from them. They thought that Hari was showing off or acting overly smart by speaking English with them. Instead of resisting such attitudes, Hari withdrew his use of English with his Bhutanese friends. He felt that speaking English might impact negatively on his acceptance to the Bhutanese networks and on his identity as a Nepali-speaking Bhutanese. In the following anecdote, Hari describes being humiliated for using his English when interacting with a young Bhutanese in the supermarket:

> I was in the supermarket. I saw a new Bhutanese there. He was also doing his shopping. Looking at his face, I knew he was a Bhutanese. I wanted to speak and tried

> to be friendly because he was also very young. So I said to him "Hi. How are you?" But he replied brusquely in Nepali: "Brother! You are a Nepali-speaker and I am too. So why are you speaking English with me?" I replied, "I just want to improve my English". Then he rudely said to me "You are a Nepali. I am also Nepali. So how can you improve English? Don't try to be over-smart". I felt guilty… that I shouldn't have spoken English with him. After that I never spoke English with any Bhutanese.

It was difficult for Hari to develop friendships with native English speakers due to his lack of proficiency in English. He did not even need to make any social contact with them for his immediate requirements. However, as a consequence he felt excluded from all English-speaking social networks. Hari wrote in his diary, "I never had any Anglo-Australian friends. I don't need to make friends with them because I mostly hang out with Bhutanese".

Although Hari had a few African friends with whom he used to hang out with occasionally and practise his English, his senior relatives forced him to withdraw from his friendships with them. Hari stated, "My elderly Bhutanese said I should stop hanging out with African friends. In their opinion the Africans are bad people". Since Hari was an obedient member of the family, and he had a normal inclination to follow the cultural rules that they imposed on him, he did not resist their racist views on his African friends.

8.4 A Job at a Petrol Station

In October 2014, Hari found full-time employment in a petrol service station with the help of his cousin. As a petrol-station attendant, his main tasks included: the acceptance of cash, or debit/credit card payments from customers and to give out receipts, order new stock for the retail section, keep customer records on a daily basis, and to clean the petrol pump and surrounding areas. It was evident that most of his activities were dependent on interacting with English-speaking customers.

Hari was extremely happy to get the first job of his life because it would not only bring him economic benefits but also because he could practise his spoken English with native English speakers. In fact, the workplace was the only place where Hari had social

contact with native English speakers and exposure to English being spoken in everyday social situations.

8.5 An Indian Co-Worker and an Anglo-Australian Manager

Hari's senior co-worker, Arvind, was of Indian descent and an experienced employee at the petrol service station. Arvind had a very good command of English because he had spent more than nine years in this job and in interacting with English-speaking customers. Due to Hari being a novice and Arvind an expert in the workplace context, it was Arvind who mentored Hari for his workplace socialization.

Arvind helped Hari to not only acquire the technical skills required for the job but also to familiarize him with the basic English expressions required for everyday interactions with the customers. Hari said, "Arvind taught me everything. He taught me how to talk to the customers politely. He taught me Aussie accent and some slang words".

Although Hari frequently referred to himself as being shy and an introvert, he indicated that he felt comfortable speaking English with Arvind. When Hari did not understand something that a customer asked him, he did not hesitate to seek help from Arvind. In his diary, Hari presented many examples of new language items that he had learned with the aid of Arvind. When I asked him why he felt comfortable speaking with Arvind, he said "Because Arvind is my good friend. And because I can understand Hindi very well. When the store is not busy, we also watch Hindi movies on our IPad". Despite the fact that Arvind and Hari had an unequal knowledge of English and a different social status in the workplace, Hari considered Arvind to be a "good friend". Hari also indicated that it was due to his competence in the Hindi language, and their mutual enjoyment of Bollywood Hindi movies, that helped him to connect with Arvind on a level of friendship.

In contrast, Hari reported that he felt uncomfortable speaking with his Anglo-Australian manager, David. Hari considered David as his boss in the workplace and therefore

assumed that he had to show respect to David by speaking very little with him and obeying his orders. He pointed out that being less vocal in front of his boss was a sign of respect in his culture. He explained, “In my culture I should always respect those who are superior to me. I should listen when they’re talking - and I shouldn’t respond to them”. Thus, he was reluctant to speak with someone to whom he assumed he had to show respect. Conversely, David formed a different judgment about Hari’s reluctance to talk with him. He assumed that Hari was not a friendly person and that he was unhappy with the new job just because he spoke so little. Hari was frustrated when he found out about this. He said, “I was disappointed and frustrated with my manager. He asked me ‘Aren’t you happy to work here?’ Later, I knew from Arvind that I didn’t speak friendly with him. But it is who I am”. It was obvious that the inequitable power relationship between Hari and David, and their inherent contradictory perceptions of each other, not only inhibited Hari in his interactions with David but also marginalized him at the workplace.

8.6 Learning English in the Workplace

Hari described his first week on the job as being very “confusing” and “chaotic” due to not having dealt with native English speakers in a workplace environment before. Hari had very low confidence in his English-speaking ability. He had a fear that his English would be incorrect and that he would be shamed for making a mistake in front of the customers. When he first began conversing with his customers, he had a tendency to speak with a very low voice so that the customer would be unable to point out any mistakes in his use of English. Hari stated, “My voice was reasonably low. I didn’t want them to hear my voice clearly so that they couldn’t point out that I was making a mistake”.

Hari was frustrated by his inability to understand the colloquial expressions used by his customers even though he had spent over five years in Australia. Expressions such as: “What’s up mate?” and “Hi dude, can I have a twenty stick choice gold cigarette?” had him

completely perplexed. Additionally, Hari was ashamed of his own English accent and felt that he could not do his job properly due to his poor English-speaking ability. When Hari did not understand a customer's question, he did not even dare to ask them to repeat it. He explained, "My face turned red. My mind went blank… so that I couldn't think what I had to do. I kept looking at his face but my mouth was closed".

Hari's anxiety was further exacerbated from a lack of confidence to make direct eye contact with the customers. He indicated that, in his culture, it was considered disrespectful to make straight eye contact with those who were superior to him. Hari believed that the English-speaking customers were relatively superior to him in terms of their English proficiency and, therefore, he felt too awkward to make straight eye contact with them even though he had been given feedback by Arvind to improve on this.

For Hari, developing adequate proficiency in English was a matter of necessity for his workplace socialization. Despite his initial frustrations and lack of confidence, he was very motivated to learn more English as well as the social norms of his workplace environment. Hari stated that he was continually alert and active during his workplace training. He paid careful attention to the way Arvind used his English and attempted to use the same expressions when he conversed with the customers. He wrote: "When Arvind was on the counter serving the customers, I would tend to listen carefully how he answered their questions. If he spoke any new words, I tried to use them when I conversed with a customer".

Hari acquired some routine and formulaic English through repeated interactions with his English-speaking customers. Over time, he progressed to learning the colloquial and technical variety of English required in a friendly workplace context, using expressions such as: "Howdy!" "What's up, mate!" "Which fuel do you want, regular, unleaded or premium?" "Cheers mate!" "Take it easy!" and "Have a good one!"

Hari became progressively more confident when his English use was validated by his customers. Additionally, as his confidence grew in his use of English, so did the customers treat him with a friendlier manner. He wrote, "When I spoke more confidently with them, they also behaved with me in a friendly manner. Sometimes, they initiated the conversation and talked to me with a smile".

Hari gradually improved his English beyond formulaic expressions. A few weeks after his entry into the workplace, Hari was able to troubleshoot most customer issues with an adequate use of English. For example, on one occasion Hari gave an extra ten dollar note in change to a customer; he then promptly apologized to his customer (expressing himself with correct English) and told her with confidence that she had to return the overpaid ten dollars.

Hari also began to feel comfortable in using slang and colloquial expressions in his interactions with the customers. Originally, he had presumed that these were bad words and thus tended to feel shy about using them. Hari indicated that he was inspired to use such words after he received positive feedback from his English-speaking customers. In the following excerpt, Hari described how an English-speaking woman praised his English when she heard him using Australian slang:

> There is an old woman who comes to our pump very frequently to fuel her car. She is aged around mid-60s. Two days ago she was at the counter to pay her bill but the cash register was not working. I tried several times but it didn't work. I was quite annoyed and was saying something like, "Oi! what the bloody hell is that!" The woman laughed. I said to her "Why are you laughing? Anything wrong?" She said "You're not Aussie but you used Aussie slang words. The Aussies usually use these words. Then I felt like I also needed to use the slang words. If I speak in the Aussie accent, the Australians will be happy.

Hari's motivation to practise and learn English was positively influenced by this feedback. He felt encouraged to speak more with his customers after receiving this genial comment on his expressive use of colloquial English.

8.7 Friendly and Unfriendly Customers

Hari reported that he did not always experience the same degree of acceptance from all English-speaking customers in his workplace. He distinguished between customers as being either "friendly" or "unfriendly" according to their social behaviour towards him. Hari reported that the unfriendly customers were unwilling to talk to him when they came into the store or that they spoke with him in rude tones and treated him with disrespect and prejudice. Hari considered them as "bad people in Australia". He elaborated on this in the following example:

> One young man of white complexion came in from the petrol pump today. He had tattoos on both of his arms. I was quite scared with his appearance. I presumed that this guy would be angry if I made a mistake. I lost all my confidence when the man didn't return my greeting. I felt quite angry but I was silenced. I asked him "Which account mate?" to process the payment through the cash register but he grabbed the machine from my hand and said "I will do it myself". Although it was very frustrating, I couldn't express my anger. My English was too poor to resist him.

Hari believed that he was treated with disrespect by these "unfriendly" English-speaking customers due to the fact that he was a migrant and an incompetent English speaker. Because of his feelings of inferiority, Hari lacked the self-confidence to resist this prejudice and ill-treatment although he felt angry and sad about it. Hari mentioned that he was reluctant to extend a conversation with customers of this kind when he had to deal with them at the service desk.

On the contrary, Hari felt very comfortable speaking with those who he called "friendly customers". Hari mentioned that this type of customer spoke with him in polite tones and seemed very willing to engage him in friendly conversation. According to Hari, he often had extended conversations with friendly customers because they talked to him in a polite manner and treated him with respect. In the following excerpt, Hari explained how an Anglo-Australian customer engaged him in the longest conversation he had ever had in his employment setting:

> It was a quiet day today. There were not many customers. One man came into the petrol station. He was perhaps in his mid-50s. He was very smart. He had a smiley face. He said “How are you, mate?” and I replied “Pretty good”. By that time, I had finished collecting the cash payment from him. But he kept asking questions of me. So I felt like why don’t I ask him about his background? There were no other customers in the queue so I asked him “Where do you live? Where are you from?” He also asked me “Do you go back to your country?” and many more questions like that. Our conversation continued for about five minutes. I felt very comfortable speaking with him.

This suggested that Hari felt comfortable and was likely to have meaningful conversations in English when the English speakers showed their willingness to accept him and participate in interactions with him. Conversely, when the English speakers became prejudicial towards him and avoided social interactions, Hari felt marginalized by them.

In this chapter, I have provided a detailed account of language socialization of Hari into his new workplace. This is the end of part B of the thesis. What follows is the analysis of the findings of the study based on the data from observations, interviews and reflective journal study.

Part C: Analysis and Discussion

Chapter 9

Social Network in Refugee Migration

This chapter discusses the social aspects of migration of Bhutanese refugees and the roles of family and ethnic social networks in migration decision-making process. I use the term 'migration' to denote people's movement from one country to another. In the case of Bhutanese refugees, the term refers to the movement from the refugee camps to Australia for their permanent resettlement. Likewise, for the purpose of this study, the term 'migrants' encompasses refugees as well as economic migrants. This chapter elucidates how the social networks, based on kinship, friendship and shared ethnicity, contributed to the perpetuation of Bhutanese emigration and how it shaped their decisions to immigrate to Australia.

9.1 Migration: A Less Desirable Option

The predominant assumption about refugees is that they are traumatized individuals (Jupp, 1994) who leave their home country involuntarily (Brettell & Hollifield, 2014, p. 150) due to fear of persecution. Given the forced nature of their emigration, refugees are often conceived as involuntary migrants who have no choice but to migrate. In contrast to this assumption, Van Hear (1998) argues that even the forced migrants or refugees make choices within a limited range of possibilities because they may choose to stay and suffer extreme hardship rather than leave their original place (p. 42). In the case of Bhutanese refugees, although they did not have much choice about which country to migrate to, they could choose whether to migrate to the third country or stay in the refugee camp in their country of asylum.

Not all refugees included in this study had the same degree of commitment toward resettlement to a western host country. Many respondents reported that they were personally happy to spend the remainder of their lives in the refugee camps (see chapters 4.1.2 and 5.1.2). Although the Bhutanese migration started from the late 2007, nearly all refugees in this study (except Harka and Hari) applied for their immigration visas in the period between

early 2013 to early 2014. This indicates that the majority of Bhutanese in this study were initially less inclined to emigrate from the refugee camps to their host country. This observation is consistent with the findings of the previous studies by Banki (2008) and IOM (2011).

Ritchey's (1976) "affinity hypothesis" (p. 389) suggests that the more intense the network of friends and relatives in the individual's place of residence, the less the probability of migration. Having spent more than two decades within the tightly-knit networks of kinship, friendship and shared ethnicity in the Nepalese refugee camps, several participants indicated that they were reluctant to be spatially separated from their existing social networks. Harka stated, "I was happy in Nepal for my community and culture. I could practise my rituals, attend worship ceremony at my neighbour's home, and listen to Hindu scripture from the priests". Furthermore, the majority of the middle-aged and older participants had no confidence that they could be integrated into the new linguistic and cultural environment of the host country.

A variety of social variables at the household and community levels played the crucial roles in their decisions to emigrate. In order to analyse their roles more closely, I distinguish between three types of social networks: the family network, the migrant network and the local community network. The following provides a detailed discussion of how each of the types of social networks influenced their decision migration decision.

9.2 The Family Network

Before migration, the Bhutanese refugees used to live with their extended family in crowded refugee camps that generally included wife, husband, their children, husband's parents, his siblings and their families. This close-knit network of extended family was the most influential factor in shaping their decision-making process related to migration. The following themes emerged when analysing the influence of family networks:

9.2.1 Men as decision makers

Although migration decisions were strategized within the extended family unit, not all family members played an active and equal role in decision-making process. This finding is consistent with the previous studies that have suggested that men exercise more power and authority than women in migrant decision-making due to the prevailing patriarchal norms of their society (Chant, 1998; Grasmuck & Pessar, 1991; Hoang, 2011).

Participants in this study unequivocally stated that the male members of their households (such as husband, father and father-in-law) were the principal arbiters in making decisions whether to immigrate to the western host country. Five respondents reported that there was a partial involvement of women in the context of decision making, whereas three of them stated that the decisions were solely made by men without much consultation with women. Regardless of the level of women's participation in decision making, both men and women considered men as the legitimate decision makers who have the ability to make the right decisions for the entire family. Puja commented, "I don't know what to say when they discuss about something. So I feel that my husband can make the better decision for us".

In the case where migration was not the preference of all the members of the household, women were found to be obliged to comply with the decisions made by men. That is to say, when male members of the households chose to migrate, women were unquestionably required to adhere to this decision. Rama put it this way:

> One day, my husband told his father that we should go to Australia. Father was not happy at first, but later they talked to the relatives who had already migrated here. Then, they decided to move. In fact, I was not happy to leave Nepal. But I could not argue against that.

Despite the fact that emigration from Nepal was an undesirable option for Rama, she did not resist the decision made by her husband and his father. In this respect, Rama's "agency" (Giddens, 1984) to restrain the family from migrating was constrained by her unquestionable loyalty to the patriarch's power in family decision-making.

9.2.2 Reason for migration: For the family's sake

Although the decision for family migration was primarily made by the male members, reasons for migrating were closely related to the benefit of the family as a whole. Bourdieu (1986) claims that the authorized delegation (such as a spokesperson or a household head) of a family unit not only exercises more power on behalf of the group but also commits for the "social capital" of the whole group (p. 251). In line with Bourdieu's argument, participants in this study reported that they chose to emigrate to Australia not because of their aspirations for their own future, but because of their aspirations for their children's economic and educational attainments. Drona, a father of three children, commented:

> We migrated from the underdeveloped-country to the developed-country. We hoped that the future of our children would be better here. We had spent half of our lives in the refugee camps, and we do not have any personal goals for ourselves. We are already too old. But we thought that our children would get better education and their English would be better. They would get good jobs. But that will be surely a benefit for the entire family as our children will take care of us in our old age.

Drona considered his children as the primary beneficiaries of migration because he believed that they had more potentiality to obtain educational, linguistic and financial capitals in this capital-rich country. Although Drona did not see himself as a chief beneficiary of migration due to his perceived age barrier, he hoped that the investment in his children's future might eventually generate resources that could be of great use to the whole family. Drona's view of the family centeredness can be understood with reference to Bourdieu's (1986) social capital theory. This theory argues that the resources – such as social support, wealth and reputation – embedded within the network of family relationship can be accessible to all of its members for the pursuit of collective advantage (p. 248). In this respect, Drona's motives to enrich his children's educational capital can be considered as an investment to the family capital as a whole.

Unlike Drona and other participants, Manju's reason for migrating was closely associated with her parents' health-related issues. Manju, a daughter of chronically-ill

parents, was inclined to emigrate to Australia when she learned from her migrant network that her parents would get better medical services. She stated, “Father and mother were sick. Everyone would say that if we go to Australia, they will get better medical treatment”. In this respect, the prevailing norm of collectivism deeply embedded in the Bhutanese society led Manju to prioritize her parents’ well-being over her personal preference in the process of migration decision-making.

9.3 The Migrant Network

The social networks with friends and relatives who had already immigrated to Australia also played a significant role in migration decision-making of the remainder refugees in the Nepalese camps. These transnational networks were an important source of information and advice for future migrants to move out. All respondents reported having close relatives, friends or neighbours in Australia with whom they had made contact in the process of making migration decision.

Massey et al. (1993, p. 448) suggest that the causation of migration is cumulative in that each act of migration expands social capital for prospective migrants, which in turn contribute to the perpetuation of additional migration. When more and more Bhutanese refugees began emigrating to Australia, it enhanced the transnational link between those in the country of asylum and those in Australia. The information about the country of resettlement became more easily accessible. The expansion of transnational networks reduced the risks and costs of others from the same community (Massey et al., 1993, p. 448). Although the UNHCR and IOM were the legitimate agencies responsible for providing migration-related information, respondents reported that they relied more on the information provided by their friends and relatives abroad. All the respondents reported having received information from their trusted networks before they made the decision to emigrate. Manju explained:

> We had initially thought that we cannot practice our culture and religion if we move to a foreign country. Life will be even more difficult. But my aunt who had already moved to Australia told us that we can keep our culture and tradition the same way again. Then, I thought, oh, okay, we can also live in a foreign country.

The information Manju had obtained through her trusted social network helped her to reduce the psychological cost of moving. Although she had initially deemed the third-country migration too risky due to her prevailing negative image, the positive comments she heard from her migrant network made her consider the migration option as a secure and reliable solution. In this respect, her migrant network acted as a "pull factor" (Portes & Bach, 1985) by inducing her to immigrate.

Some respondents additionally reported that their transnational networks not only served an informative function but also played a central role in migration decision-making and the choice of the destination country. Hem stated that although he had no inclination at first to emigrate from Nepal, he was constantly exhorted by his aunt who was already in Australia. He commented, "After my aunt came to Australia, she insisted my family to come to join her. So I felt compelled to come for her sake". Given that the Bhutanese culture strongly holds collectivistic values with extended family systems, Hem found it very difficult to refuse his aunt's proposal and thus eventually decided to emigrate to Australia.

9.4 The Local Community Network

At the community level, the wave of emigration had a profoundly negative effect on the pre-existing ethnic community bonds refugees had formed over the two decades in the Nepalese camps. Many of the institutional agents (Santon-Salazar, 1997) such as school teachers, social workers and religious leaders within the community emigrated for permanent resettlement to the host countries. This led to the gradual decline of the fabric of social networks and the resources such as social support, educational opportunities and religious practices embedded in those networks. The gradual decline of the community resources acted

as a "push factor" (Portes & Bach, 1985) for the remainder refugees, thereby encouraging their emigration. Maya explained:

> When the third-country resettlement was offered, people started emigrating from the refugee camps. It was not safe anymore to live there. All the good people, including teachers and community leaders, emigrated. The crime rates increased significantly. There had been repeated incidents of thefts and robberies. There were no teachers in the schools for our children. So, we also decided to emigrate.

Although Maya was initially happy with the social and cultural atmosphere she had inherited in the refugee camp, the gradual diminishment of existing cultural and community resources in combination with the consequent rise of social violence led her to choose migration as a better solution to her family. Massey et al. (1993) suggest that the "acts of migration at one point in time systematically alter the social context within which future migration decisions are made" (p. 449). In Maya's case, this alteration contributed to negative social structures, which eventually pushed her to make the decision to emigrate.

9.5 Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the effects of social networks on refugee emigration, with specific reference to how the networks of family and ethnic community contributed to the perpetuation of chain migration once started. The micro-level analysis of the data from the Bhutanese refugees in Australia offers a distinctive understanding in this respective field.

The findings suggest that moving to a new country for permanent resettlement may not be the best interest of all refugees in exile, most especially of those who have spent most of their lives in close social bonds of family and ethnic community and have developed a strong sense of belonging and cultural identification there. The findings also indicate that in the case of Bhutanese refugees, the decision to emigrate was neither solely the outcome of individual member preference nor solely determined by the political (Malkki, 1995, p. 499) and economic push factors. The causation of migration of Bhutanese respondents in this study was associated more closely with sociological variables such as social capital,

community structure and family influences. The expansion of family and ethnic networks in the country of destination acted as a pull factor for the remainder refugees, whereas the breakdown of the original community ties in the country of asylum acted as a push factor. This indicates that, when viewed sociologically, refugee migration can also be interpreted as partly chain migration process, whereby the initial migration of the family members and community leaders is likely to be the cause of the subsequent migration of the remainder refugees who may initially have no interest in emigration.

Chapter 10

Family and Ethnic Networks: Help or Hindrance?

This chapter explores the positive and negative effects of family and ethnic networks on language learning and socio-cultural integration of Bhutanese refugees in Australia. Hamers and Blanc (2000, p. 111) define social networks as "the sum of all the interpersonal relations one individual establishes with others over time". In this study, I use the term 'ethnic network' to refer to individuals' interpersonal relationships with those who share the same ethnic and cultural background as theirs. Additionally, I use the term 'family network' to denote the structural relationships among extended family members that include spouse, children, parents, grandparents, parents-in-law and aunts.

To examine the effects of family and ethnic social networks, this chapter mainly draws on the theory of social capital described by Bourdieu (1986, 1991) and Putnam (2000, 2007). Bourdieu (1986) defines social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (p. 248). The resources embedded in the social networks can be regarded as social capital when these resources are mobilisable for the pursuit of individual and collective advantage (Anthias, 2007, p. 788). Therefore, social capital is deeply rooted in the network of relationships that provide access to social resources to those who are in the network. It is the collective asset of the social networks. Taking these views into account, this chapter explores how the resettled Bhutanese refugees utilized their family and ethnic resources during their language learning and integration process and how their networks positively and negatively influenced these two processes.

The concept of integration can be implemented in multiple ways (see chapter 2.4), and in this chapter I use the term to refer to both the means and markers of successful

settlement of refugees. I will examine the positive effect of family and ethnic networks by drawing mainly on their role in accessing the objective markers of integration, such as housing, transportation, health and education. Similarly, I will explore the negative effect of these networks from the perspective of integration into the wider Australian society. Moreover, in chapter 13, I will examine the subjective meaning of refugee integration by exploring various social and cultural contexts in which its meaning was rooted

I have divided this chapter into three sections. Section 10.1 discusses the positive side of family and ethnic networks with specific reference to their roles in language learning and integration process. Section 10.2 examines the dark side of family and ethnic networks with particular attention to how the excessive "embeddedness" (see Granovetter, 1985) within these networks inhibits the language learning and integration. The last section, section 10.3, summarizes the main points discussed in this chapter.

10.1 The Positive Side of Family and Ethnic Networks

In this section, I will present a detailed account of the strength of family and ethnic networks in the integration and formal language learning of Bhutanese refugees. I will discuss this by dividing them into three categories: the family network (subsection 10.2.1), the ethnic network (subsection 10.2.2) and the classroom ethnic network (subsection 10.2.3).

10.1.1 The familial network

In this subsection, I will discuss how the familial networks facilitated the settlement and integration process of new arrival refugees in Australia. The following key themes emerged when examining the data:

10.1.1.1 Pre-existing familial network as a source of support

The pre-existing familial network was the most important source of support for the newcomer Bhutanese at the early stage of their settlement in Australia. As discussed in chapter 9.1.3, most respondents had other immediate or extended family members living in

Australia prior to their arrival. Refugees with such pre-existing social networks were found to be reliant primarily on their close ties for any immediate support services needed during their initial transition and integration. The newcomer Bhutanese sought access to a range of "emotional, instrumental and informational support" (Schaefer, Coyne, & Lazarus, 1981) from those who were more familiar with the local environment. Manju commented:

> When we first arrived in Australia, we were just like a child. But my aunt was already in Tasmania before my family came. So she did everything we needed in order to settle here. She helped us to find a house, cooked food for us over a week, taught us how to use the western appliances, did shopping for us and took us to different places. She also taught us how to use the public transport and told us about where the hospital is, how the system works in Australia and where the Indian grocery store is.

The pre-existing social networks of close kin provided Manju with access to instrumental support in the form of food and shelter, and also informational support through advice on transportation, health, education and government services. In addition, her familial network helped her cope with emotions associated with homesickness and nostalgia: "When I feel very sad missing my camp life, I tend to go to my aunt and she give me sympathy and encouragement".

10.1.1.2 Reciprocal exchange of support

Drawing on the relationship between norms of reciprocity and social capital, Putnam (2000) suggests that the social networks and cooperation cultivate norms of reciprocity, which in turn reinforce social capital. The close-knit familial network enabled the resettled Bhutanese to reciprocate resources and support for the mutual benefit. Puja stated, "When we live in a joint family, we can get help from each other, we can share our feelings, and we can support each other". The exchange of support among the family members was largely governed by the underlying "norm of reciprocity" (See Portes, 1998, p. 7), although the reciprocity alone would not determine the nature of relationship within the family unit.

The newcomer Bhutanese not only received support from their earlier migrated familial networks but also gave it in return when possible in a reciprocal manner. Previous

studies on familial capital (such as Boyd, 1989; Lamba & Krahn, 2003; Ryan, Sales, Tilki, Siara, 2008) have focussed only on the support the refugees (or migrants) get from their pre-existing social networks, with no attention being paid to how the newcomers can reciprocate the support they receive.

After arriving in Australia, Tek had a privileged access to a range of support services through his pre-existing networks of extended family in the area of destination. He and his wife joined his in-laws' household and lived together in the extended family arrangement. His familial network reduced his financial costs associated with settlement because he "did not need to pay the house rent but contribute some money to pay the utility bills and other expenses". It also contributed to the enhancement of his human capital by helping him learn to drive a car and obtain a driver's license.

The social capital embodied in networks of extended family structures was beneficial not only to Tek himself but also to his in-law's family. Having comparatively better command of English than other family members, Tek assumed the responsibility for serving as a cultural and language broker between his illiterate parents-in-law and their service providers in various English-speaking environments. Tek commented, "I help them to make appointments at hospital, interpret for them, visit Centrelink with them and assist them in shopping".

The underlying norm of reciprocity was also evidenced in intergenerational family relationships. It seems apparent from the data that the elderly parents were highly reliant on their adult children for the continued financial, instrumental and expressive support due to their lack of adequate human and cultural capitals needed for the successful navigation of the socio-cultural environments in their new country. Parents reciprocated the support received with their commitment to various forms of household labour such as child care, dishwashing, cooking, cleaning and gardening. Harka's case (see chapter 7.2) illustrates this. Harka, a

non-English speaking older Bhutanese, was excessively dependent on his adult children for translation, cultural brokering, transportation and financial support. In return, Harka recompensed this support to his children by assuming his responsibility for supervision and rearing of his grandchildren. This indicates that, contrary what the previous studies have emphasized (Coleman, 1988, p. S109; Portes, 1998, p. 11), both the children and their parents can be the beneficiaries of the collective form of familial capital in the context of refugee migration.

Overall, the findings discussed above suggest that the close-knit network of extended family members was the most salient source of social capital for the Bhutanese refugees, enabling them to access various forms of support during their transition to the Australian society. The prevailing interdependence norms among the resettled Bhutanese families made a significant contribution to the enrichment of their financial, cultural and emotional integration. It also enabled the newcomers to fulfil their immediate materialistic needs of integration by facilitating their access to housing, transportation, health, translation and government services. Now, the next subsection examines the positive contribution of ethnic-specific community networks in refugee settlement and integration.

10.1.2 The co-ethnic network

The importance of co-ethnic communities and the networks they contain has been well-recognized in refugee studies (Ager & Strang, 2010; Griffiths, Sigona, & Zetter, 2005). In this subsection, I will particularly examine the nature of co-ethnic relationships among the resettled Bhutanese and its role in producing social capital to promote the collective well-being and integration.

10.1.2.1 Community bonds for altruistic support

The principle of "homophily" (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001, p. 416) suggests that people are naturally more likely to make personal contact with those who are

like them than those who are unlike them. Ethnic homophily was the key to shaping the network boundary of many Bhutanese refugees in this study. The observation and interview data demonstrate that most resettled Bhutanese were highly inclined to immerse themselves in the social and cultural life of their pre-existing co-ethnic community and rely heavily on the networks it contains for any support and companionship (see chapters 4.1.2 and 5.1.2). Despite this, there was also socio-cultural diversity and division within the Bhutanese community (see chapter 13.2).

The Bhutanese with limited cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) in the form of English proficiency and target-culture knowledge exhibited the high level of ethnic homophily due to the fact that they experienced more adversity in cross-cultural integration. Harka's case outlined in chapters 7.3 and 7.4 illustrates this. Because Harka was confronted with cultural and linguistic barriers to participating in cross-ethnic activities, his social networks were entirely concentrated within the boundary of ethnic homophily. Harka reported that he managed to develop strong social ties with several Bhutanese whom he did not know before he arrived in Australia. Many other respondents, even those with relatively more linguistic capital, echoed similar experiences of ethnic homophily.

This kind of ethnic homophily contributed to some beneficial effects on the initial successful transition of refugees, although it also posed a significant risk of potential ethnic enclave and segregation (see section 10.2). Ethno-centric homophily fostered a strong sense of solidarity among the resettled Bhutanese, by virtue of which they gained ready access to various forms of altruistic support from their co-ethnic networks. The newcomer Bhutanese obtained a range of support and information from the old-timer Bhutanese who were more familiar with the Australian society. This enabled the newcomers to fulfil their immediate objective needs of transition to the new society. Khem, the Bhutanese community leader, explained this:

> When a new Bhutanese family comes here, the other Bhutanese who are already here go to meet them, bring them in their homes and cook food for them. So the new family does not feel loneliness. They feel like – here are also my neighbours, here are also my relatives, here are also Bhutanese community. We also help the newcomers to find a house in the town, learn about the transportation system and about how to obtain a driver's license, which is the best school for our children, and also about Australian culture. We do everything they need because they face a lot of challenges at the early stage.

As the above interview excerpt indicates, the newcomer Bhutanese received a range of instrumental and informational support from the old-timer Bhutanese. In addition, this co-ethnic network also served the emotional support function because showing care through providing practical help for the newcomers seemed to have promoted their sense of inclusion, enabling them to mitigate the feelings of loneliness and homesickness.

The mechanism that bound the newcomer and old-timer Bhutanese together can be viewed as what Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) calls "bounded solidarity" (p. 1325). Portes and Sensenbrenner argue that the bounded solidarity does not come from people's reciprocal exchanges of benefits, but from "out of the situational reaction of a class of people faced with common adversities" (p. 1325). In the case of old-timer Bhutanese, the sentiment attached to the newcomers ("because they face a lot of challenges") seemed to have been the main source of motivation to offer support even in the absence of any materialistic benefits in return. Moreover, it might also have stemmed from the collectivistic culture that pervades the Bhutanese society. Regardless of the case, the motivation for the co-ethnic support arose from the normative commitment (Wiener, 1982) rather than from the instrumental benefits.

This sort of normative commitment, reinforced by co-ethnic bounded solidarity, enabled the families to seek philanthropic support during adverse situations such as death of a family member, serious illness, financial hardship and confrontation with members of the host society. There was an evidence of strong unity at the community level during such adversities, despite the fact that the relationships at the sub-community and individual levels were not always marked by mutual respect and admiration (see chapter 13.2.2). Respondents

provided many examples of philanthropic support obtained from community networks in times of crisis situation. Harka put it this way:

> Recently, a Bhutanese man committed suicide in our area. He did not have a friendly relationship with many Bhutanese including his close relatives. But when we knew that he went missing, every single Bhutanese tried their best to search him all over Launceston. We also collected the fund of $5000 to support the deceased man's family, and also helped them morally and emotionally.

Despite the fact that various formal organizations (such as the Migrant Resource Centre) offered a range of practical and informational support to Government-sponsored refugees for their successful transition, the social support obtained from internal community networks was found more effective in certain circumstances than those provided by external organizations. Given that the support networks within the co-ethnic community were largely governed by the normative commitment, the support-seekers seemed to have placed a high level of trust in the information and support provided by these networks. Maya explained this, "It is much easier to ask Bhutanese for any kind of help. They are our community people, more like friends, and more trustworthy". Maya also emphasized that the support from the internal networks was more easily accessible and also linguistically and culturally more appropriate.

10.1.2.2 Promotion of ethnic culture and emotional well-being

The dense networks of co-ethnics also had an important advantage for the retention and promotion of ethno-cultural resources that the refugees had imported from their origin country. From the multicultural point of view, maintenance of heritage culture and identity can be seen as an important indicator of emotional and cultural well-being. Although a large body of literature has focussed on the role of co-ethnic networks in refugee settlement and integration (Lamba & Krahn, 2003; Ryan et al., 2008; Williams, 2006), little attention has been paid to the importance of such networks in reproducing cultural identity and satisfying cultural needs of refugees.

The existence of strong co-ethnic networks enabled the resettled Bhutanese to reinforce and retain their religious and ethnic identity and celebrate their own rituals and traditions in Australia. Within the Bhutanese community, there was a high level of diversity in terms of religious and cultural affiliations and identities (see chapter 13.2). Refugees were inclined to maintain ties with their own religious and cultural subgroups for the usual worship gatherings and ethno-cultural practices. For instance, Harka tended to maintain a strong linkage with his own Hindu Bhutanese subgroup by attending the weekend *kirtan*, a worship program in which more than 40 Hindu Bhutanese gathered from all over Northern Tasmania (see chapter 7.3).

Their participation in such religious and cultural activities at the community level had a positive impact on their emotional integration. The responses that "I feel happy that I can practise my culture" and "I didn't feel cultural shock because there are many Bhutanese" emerged frequently in the interview data. In addition, during my field work, I observed the constant flow of marriages, celebrations, cultural gatherings and religious events within the community. Additionally, Hem commented that "When we all Kirat Bhutanese meet together in a hall and perform our traditional dance and worship, I forget all my pain and sufferings". This indicates that such cultural gatherings seemed to have a "multiplication effect" (Siisiainen, 2003) on refugee integration, as it allowed them not only to meet their cultural needs in a new environment but also to maintain their emotional well-being.

10.1.3 The co-ethnic network in the classroom

The analysis of the classroom data suggests that the presence strong co-ethnic networks resulted in some positive outcomes in formal language learning of refugees in the AMEP classes. One of the benefits was the bilingual peer support in scaffolding L2 learning. The bilingual support was the ethnic-specific resource embedded in the network of co-ethnics. More capable students spontaneously provided this type of L1 scaffold to their co-

ethnic peers, enabling them to perform their L2 tasks in meaningful ways (see chapters 4.2.1 and 5.2.2). In this respect, co-ethnic networks can be considered as a source of social capital in formal language learning in multi-ethnic classroom.

Previous studies (such as Harbord, 1992; Murray & Wigglesworth, 2005) have consistently stressed the significance of L1 use in the L2 learning process. In the case of Bhutanese students, L1 support was found particularly beneficial for beginner language learners, as they generally had inadequate English to engage in meaningful communication with their teacher and cross-ethnic peers. Rama's case, as shown in chapter 4.2.1, illustrates this. Although Rama attempted to get the meaning of the unfamiliar vocabulary for her writing task by asking her non-Nepali speaking peer, their joint inadequacy in the target language hindered their verbal interaction. Then, Rama asked for bilingual support to her co-ethnic friend who successfully explained the meaning of the word by providing its translation equivalent in their L1

In addition, Harka, a preliminary learner of English, emphasized the need for bilingual assistance in pursuing his English literacy and numeracy practices. Drawing on his learning experience from home tutoring sessions, Harka explained how difficult it was for him to understand his English-speaking tutor's instruction. Harka sometimes sought access to bilingual support through his familial network, as his daughter-in-law served the role of the interpreter between him and his tutor. In this sense, Harka's familial network functioned as a linguistic scaffold, enabling him to understand the instructions given by his English tutor.

In addition to its pedagogical advantages, the dense network of co-ethnics also had a social value in fostering cooperative learning in the classroom. Peer feedback was a co-ethnic social capital that enabled the Bhutanese to check the structure of their English sentence before offering it to the whole class. For instance, when Maya was asked to answer the teacher's question, she sought feedback from her co-ethnic friend (in chapter 4.2.1) which

allowed her the opportunity to correct linguistic errors before she exposed her answer to the whole class.

Drawing on the theory of social capital, this section has examined the positive impacts of family and ethnic networks on formal language learning and integration of refugees. Varied dynamics of family and co-ethnic relationships were explored with specific reference to their roles in social capital formation for resettled refugees in Australia. Now, the next section will examine the negative side of family and ethnic networks, with particular attention to how the excessive embeddedness within the family and ethnic networks inhibits the target language practices and cross-cultural integration process.

10.2 The Dark Side of Family and Ethnic Networks

In applying the theory of social capital to migration, Portes (1998) argues that social capital "cuts both ways" (p. 18). This means that the negative types of social capital also exist.

This section will discuss the negative aspects of refugees' social networks mainly from the perspective of English language learning. Previous studies have demonstrated that proficiency in English is central to refugee's full integration into the Australian society (see chapter 2.5). In light of the significance of language learning for successful integration, this section will detail how the over-embeddedness in family and ethnic networks constrained the opportunities for the refugees to invest in their English learning through meaningful social interaction and how it impeded them from becoming an integral part of the larger Australian society.

The social perspective on second language acquisition (SLA) suggests that language is acquired through meaningful interaction in a variety of social contexts (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Norton Pierce, 1995; Spolsky, 1988). As Firth and Wagner put it, "language is acquired and learned through social interaction … and should be studied in interactive encounters" (p.

287). Hence, the opportunities to use the target language in a communicative context are crucial for successful language acquisition to occur. Taking this perspective of SLA, Norton Pierce (1995) proposes the sociological concept of 'investment' in contrast to the psychological concept of 'motivation', arguing that the learner's desire (or motivation) to invest in the target language is not fixed and unitary. She contends that motivation is constantly shaped by the unequal forces of social structures and the changing and complex identity of the language learner (p. 20). This is exampled by one of her research participants, Matrina, who was not invested in participating in social interaction with her discriminatory work colleagues despite being highly motivated to learn, yet became so when her family was at risk. Drawing on Norton Pierce's notion of investment, this section will explore how the cultural norms and expectations that govern the refugees' family and ethnic networks have a negative impact on their investment in language learning.

This section is divided into four subsections. The first subsection will explore the negative influence of traditional gender norms and identities on women's investment in language learning and their upward social mobility. The second subsection will view refugees' home and ethnic community contexts as negative sites of English language learning, and will discuss how the normative pressure imposed by family and ethnic networks constrain their investment in English communication skills. The third subsection will argue that the overreliance on ethnic networks reduce the incentives to procure wider social integration. The last subsection will scrutinize the negative impacts of ethnic networks on classroom language learning.

10.2.1 Gender identity and investment in English

Despite the value of familial capital as a collective asset, embeddedness in the close-knit family networks did not, however, give each member of the networks "the same access to resources" (Anthias, 2007, p. 797). The traditional gendered practices and unequal division

of gendered roles curtailed refugee women's access to resources imperative for linguistic capital accumulation and upward social mobility.

The intensity of the social support network within the family unit was shaped by culturally-prescribed gender norms that the refugees had been socialized into in their country of origin and brought with them following their migration. These norms reinforced and regulated distinct roles and obligations for men and women. The stereotypical gender roles, in which men were the family spokespersons and women were the homemakers, were highly prevalent in the Bhutanese community studied (see chapters 4.1.2 and 5.1.2).

Although the gender-specific roles within the families contributed to the sum of family capital through the reciprocal exchange of support and mutual obligations, it had a profound effect on women's investment (Norton Pierce, 1995) in English learning and their upward social mobility, confining women mostly to the domestic sphere and allowing men greater access to English language use in everyday life. In other words, women were less invested in English compared to the male counterparts in informal communicative contexts. Puja commented:

> I usually do household works such as cooking and dishwashing. I take care of my parents-in-law. I make tea for them and wash their clothes. My husband does external works. He speaks on behalf of the family. He deals with native English speakers. He makes appointment at the hospital. He speaks English in the public agencies. For shopping, we both usually go together, but he usually speaks English if we have to ask something. When the white people come to our home, he talks to them in English. I just listen to their conversation, but don't speak unless they ask something specific about me. This is our tradition. Our parents followed the same tradition in Bhutan. Women used to do household works in Bhutan. In Nepal also, we did the same. And, this is important to keep family relations.

Puja's identity as a homemaker within her family had a detrimental effect on her investment in English learning in communicative contexts, as this identity compelled her to perform household labour and take care of her parents-in-law rather than speak English with the native speakers of English. In contrast, her husband's identity as a family spokesperson gave him legitimacy to speak English on behalf of the family and deal with the public world.

Although Puja knew that her homemaker identity was unfavourable to her English language socialization, she was reluctant to resist and reconstruct a new identity to claim "the right to speak" (Norton Pierce, 1995, p. 18) because she was overly-embedded in her family networks and thus demonstrated strong conformity to the traditional gender norms that those networks enforced.

The motivation for the Bhutanese students to come to the AMEP class and make their investment in learning English was highly affected by the particular identity they had developed within the family unit. In examining the language learning experience of the four immigrant Combodian women in the United States, Skilton-Sylvester (2002) found that the learners' particular identity outside the classroom had a significant impact on their claiming of the "right to participate" (p. 23) in the classroom language learning. In the case of Bhutanese students, the masculine identity such as husband or son was more favourable than the feminine identity such as wife or daughter-in-law with respect to their participation and investment in formal language learning.

Most of the married Bhutanese women (such as Maya, Dipa, Rupa and Rama) were less invested in attending the AMEP class because their multiple feminine identities (such as wife, daughter-in-law and mother) entailed greater commitment to the domestic duties in their homes. For example, Maya attributed her poor classroom attendance and low motivation for classroom language learning to her domestic responsibilities of taking care of her elderly parents-in-law and her three children, who were often sick (see chapter 4.1.2). For Maya, her identities as mother and daughter-in-law were more important than her identity as a language learner in the class ("because I'm trapped in the family's jail"). On the contrary, Raju's masculine identities (father, husband) within the family unit prompted greater investment in learning English both in the AMEP class and outside it (see chapter 4.1.2.3). Raju was highly motivated to learn English because he was aware of the fact that he needed to have a good

command of English in order to perform his family roles associated with his masculine identities. He commented, "I'm the head of the family… So I have to focus on studying". Raju's desire to learn English can be framed within the context of the Bhutanese patriarchal system into which Raju was socialized and had internalized.

Although the previous studies on migration and gender (such as Kibria, 1990; Gordon, 2004) have documented the dramatic changes in traditional gendered practices after immigration, this was not found to be true in the case of Bhutanese women. Gordon's study with Lao refugee women in the United States revealed how the shifts in traditional gendered identities expanded women's investment in English language acquisition both within and outside classroom. However, unlike Lao women, Bhutanese women in this study were deeply embedded in the family networks and thus seemed reluctant to challenge the traditional norms and practices that those networks enforced.

The family capital was an important source of instrumental and emotional resources in the context of refugee migration and integration. However, at the same time, the context in which this capital was created was also responsible for reproducing gender inequalities and injustice. Now, the next subsection will examine the refugees' home and ethnic community context from the perspective of English language learning.

10.2.2 Negative interactional space for English learning

Several SLA researchers have stressed the significance of interaction beyond the classroom context for developing learners' communicative competence in the target language (Norton Pierce, 1995; Spolsky, 1988; Chiswick & Miller, 1995). Chiswick and Miller argue that the communicative context of the learners' home environment has a significant impact on their L2 learning because a huge amount of linguistic interaction takes place among those living together in the same roof (p. 250). However, in the case of Bhutanese learners of English, the close-knit family networks contributed to the enforcement of linguistic norms

that compelled the members of families to use their ethnic language as the medium of everyday communication. Consequently, this curtailed their exposure to English in the interactional space within their family unit despite some members having a desire to practise their English communicatively in this space.

Milroy and Milroy (1992) argue that the strong network ties have a greater capacity to impose the linguistic norm onto its members than the weak network ties (p. 6). Respondents reported about a linguistic norm that the Nepali language had different honorific forms to express different degrees of respect and politeness. Thus, a person of lower social status (wife, children) were expected to use higher honorific forms when addressing the higher-status interlocutors (husband, parents). Many female and young participants indicated that due to their strong conformity to this linguistic norm, they mostly used Nepali when interacting with someone who had a higher social status within the family or ethnic community. Maya commented:

> I usually don't speak English at home. Sometimes, I speak with my children because they ask me to speak with them in English. But I never speak English with my husband, my parents and my parents-in-law. It's our Nepali culture. In our culture, if I say something to my husband in English, people will criticize me. They tell me that I've become over-smart to him. My husband may think that I am showing off and disrespectful to him. It may sound very impolite and rude. So I should use very honorific Nepali when talking to them.

Maya believed that the use of Nepali when communicating with someone of higher status and power was an important way of showing respect to them. Thus, she deliberately avoided using English when conversing with her husband and her parents.

Although the acquisition of English was generally viewed as desirable to facilitate the interaction between Bhutanese and Australian communities, investment in learning English through intra-ethnic communication was discouraged and unwelcomed. Some respondents reported embarrassment and negative reactions related to English use with their Bhutanese friends in the ethnic communicative context. Hari's story in chapter 8.3 illustrates this.

Although Hari was highly motivated to learn English by using it in everyday communication, he encountered antagonism, refusal and humiliating treatment when he attempted to use it with a Bhutanese friend in the supermarket. It discouraged Hari from continuing to invest in his English learner identity in the context where L1 could be spoken.

These findings are in line with the previous studies (Norton Pierce, 1995; Yates, 2011), which have shown that the learners' investment in a second language is largely shaped by the immediate social context in which they find themselves in. Despite the high motivation and interest some Bhutanese had, their investment in their identity as a language learner was constrained by the social, cultural and linguistic limitations imposed on them by their bonding kinship and ethnic networks. Thus, it is possible that the refugees' internal social networks may not only contribute to social capital, but it may also undermine the agency and identity of the individual members of the network.

For some Bhutanese families (such as Harka's and Hem's families), investment in Nepali in the home context was associated with what Lin (1999) calls "expressive actions" (p. 39). Both Harka's and Hem's families considered it extremely important that their children fully immersed in the Nepali language at home because they believed that acquiring their ethnic language was an important way of retaining their ethnic culture and identity. Therefore, in both families, interaction in English was highly discouraged. Harka's and Hem's families made a special effort in providing the opportunities for their children's oral and written Nepali practices at home. Harka's family made the investment of their physical capital (such as Nepali story and grammar books, Nepali CDs, Nepali comics) and created the monolingual environment at home to facilitate the Nepali learning of their children (see chapter 7.5). Likewise, Hem invested his human capital by setting a special time every day to support his daughter's Nepali learning through direct instruction (see chapter 4.1.2.1). Although their deliberate investment in Nepali at home was closely associated with their

pragmatic motivation to reduce the communication gap between parents and their young children, this kind of monolingual environment may inhibit children's agency and their ability to acquire the default language of communication in domains such as school. Research on child bilingualism suggests that the children who are exposed to two languages simultaneously from the very early age at home become more proficient in both languages rather than those who begin to learn the second language after acquiring the first language (Arnberg, 1987). Having argued in this subsection that the strong family and ethnic networks inhibit refugees' investment in their language learning identity, in the following subsection I will discuss how the over-embeddedness in these bonding networks inhibits bridging social networks with the wider Australian community.

10.2.3 A situation of ethnic enclave

The presence of tight-knit family and ethnic networks reduced the incentives of many Bhutanese to invest in and develop new networks with Australians who were capable of providing opportunities to practise their English interactively. Norton Pierce (1995) argues that when learners invest their time and efforts on language use and learning, they do so with the hope that they will receive a reward on that investment in the form of symbolic and material resources (p. 17). However, Bhutanese with strong family and ethnic ties obtained the social resources for their immediate and basic needs through their internal social networks in the form of bonding social capital (see section 10.1). Thus, this overwhelming access to ethnic-specific capital reduced their economic and social incentives to develop networks with the wider Australian community and use English interactively in the natural learning context. This finding is consistent with the findings of previous studies (Beckhusen, Florax, Graaff, Poot, & Waldorf, 2013; Chiswick & Miller, 1995), reinforcing that the migrants who live in ethnic enclave have less incentives to invest in and are less likely to be proficient in the destination language of the receiving country.

The overembeddedness in the family and ethnic networks reduced the incentives of Harka to invest his time and efforts in learning English and furthering his wider social integration (see chapter 7.4). Harka was confronted with the tension between his desire to develop social networks with the Anglophone people through the use of English and his strong identification with the close-knit Bhutanese networks. Despite his motivation to establish new networks with the English-speaking community in the hope that it could offer him the opportunities to use and learn English, he did not in fact attempt to invest his time and efforts to do so. The benefits he received through the same, small group of Bhutanese and the risks associated with establishing new networks due to his lack of English gravitated Harka towards the comfort zone of Bhutanese enclave. Harka thus remained solely within his ethnic enclave through which he fulfilled his social, financial and religious needs without speaking English (see chapter 7.2 and 7.3). On that account, Harka's acculturation strategy reflects "separation" rather than "integration" (Berry, 1997, p. 9). Despite his access to family and ethnic capital that helped him to fulfil his immediate needs, he remained isolated from the wider Australian networks that could have helped him to access varied resources for English learning, autonomy and upward social mobility.

Many other Bhutanese, even those with rich cultural capital in the form of English proficiency and education, remained largely isolated from the English-speaking Australian community. The responses that "I spend all my time with Bhutanese" and "I don't need to mingle with the white people here" emerged frequently in the interview data. Puja, an intermediate-level English learner, put it this way:

> About 100 Bhutanese families are currently living in this small suburb. I know nearly all of them. We maintain frequent contact with each other. We go visit other Bhutanese and have food and tea any time of day, sorts of thing. On weekends, friends and relatives often come to my house. I spend almost 99% of my time with Bhutanese because I feel more comfortable with them. In fact, I don't have any white Australian friends and I don't need to mingle with them.

Puja's strong immersion in the close-knit ethnic networks significantly limited her prospect of developing new networks with the Anglophone people. Like Harka, Puja's lack of desire to step out of her comfort zone of ethnic enclave was sharply linked to the availability of companionship and support networks within her own community, in combination with the risks involved in developing new social networks through the use of English. Griffiths et al. (2005) warn that such overreliance on in-group social networks may lead to a situation of ethnic ghettoization, preventing migrants from integrating into and reaping the benefits of English learning from the wider Australian society.

In the previous three subsections, I have discussed the negative influences of family and ethnic networks on English language learning in natural context. Now, in the last subsection, I will discuss their influences on classroom language learning.

10.2.4 Classroom ethnic network

Although learning to use English was the primary focus of the language learners in the AMEP class, the tendency among Bhutanese to avoid to use English when communicating with each other was a prevalent issue in their formal language learning process (see chapters 4.2.2, 4.2.3, and 5.2.3). As was discussed in section 10.1.3, the use of L1 in the L2 learning process is found beneficial if the members of the L1-speaking group employ it for scaffolding their L2 learning, such as clarifying the meaning of L2 lexis. However, if L1 is used extensively as a communication tool rather than merely as a L2 learning tool, it will reduce their exposure to and interaction in the language being taught in the class and inhibit their overall progress in language learning.

Chapter 4.3.3 illustrates how the extensive use of L1 among Bhutanese of beginner's English class resulted in an absence of English communication practice during the information-gap activity. Although the information-gap activity was pedagogically aimed at providing students with opportunities to practise English target structures by asking and

answering questions in pair/group situations, none of the Bhutanese within a communicative group used English when obtaining and giving personal information for the completion of their tasks. They translated the target questions into their L1 when seeking information from their peers. The output hypothesis in SLA suggests that it is only through the production of the language that the L2 learners can get mastery over the language being taught in the class (Swain, 1995). On that account, the tendency to overuse L1 among Bhutanese hindered rather than facilitated their formal English language learning.

The participants reported that, despite their awareness of the pedagogical value of communicating in English, their feelings of discomfort and embarrassment led them to overuse L1 in contexts where interaction occurred among Bhutanese. The fear of being criticized by other Bhutanese on English use was a recurrent theme not only in the beginner's English class but also in the intermediate class (see chapters 4.2.3 and 5.2.3). The overuse of L1 for the interaction within their ethnic network was a strategy to prevent from the potential risk of peer criticism. In this respect, "masking their investment" (Kim, 2003) in English in such context neither brought them rewards in the form learning and improvement of communication skills, nor did it create a risk of losing face in front of other Bhutanese. The classroom ethnic network can thus be viewed as a "negative interpersonal space" (Kurata, 2007, p. 5.4) where their identities as language learners were undermined rather than enhanced.

Moreover, the presence of strong L1-speaking networks reduced their incentive to seek academic help from the non-L1 speaking peers. From the cost-benefit perspective (Chiswick & Miller, 2002), the communication with the non-L1 speaking peers was naturally more costly compared to the communication with the L1-speaking peers due to the fact that they needed to use English as a lingua franca in the latter situation. This was particularly challenging for the Bhutanese in the beginner English class, as they often encountered

communication breakdown and failure to negotiate meaning. As a consequence, many of them mostly chose to remain within their comfort zone of L1 enclave for their classroom social interaction (see chapters 4.3.2 and 5.3.1). Yet, too much bonding within the community network curtailed their opportunities for English practice and their language proficiency development.

In this subsection, I have discussed the negative influences of classroom ethnic network on formal language learning. In the next section, I will summarize the key findings discussed in this chapter.

10.3 Summary

The family and ethnic networks can be a mixed blessing for refugees in their settlement, language learning and integration process. It can generate both positive and negative social capital.

On the positive side, the internal social networks provided the newcomers with ready access to various resources and information that are necessary to achieve different objective domains of integration including housing, transportation, health, education and public services. In addition, the cultural and emotional support derived from social bonds had a positive effect on the mitigation of acculturation stress during their initial transition. From the language learning perspective, the bilingual peer support obtained from classroom co-ethnic network was beneficial for scaffolding meaningful learning of English. So, taking all these benefits into account, the family and ethnic networks can be considered as positive social capital for refugees in their integration process.

On the negative side, the overembeddedness of refugees in their family and ethnic networks had a negative influence on their investment in language learner identity and their wider social integration. Belonging to the close-knit family network did not provide men and women with equal access and opportunities to resources necessary for language learning

investment and upward social mobility. Furthermore, bonding social networks were identified as obstacles to investing in learning English in the home and community contexts due to the prevailing linguistic norm that encouraged ethnic language interaction. The overwhelming access of ethnic-specific resources gravitated some Bhutanese toward their comfort zone of ethnic enclave, reducing their incentive to establish new links with the wider Australian society. In the formal learning context, the overuse of ethnic language for in-group communication inhibited their oral English practise in the language-learning situation and their socialization with non-Bhutanese peers. In this respect, the close-knit family and ethnic networks can be considered as negative social capital for language socialization and integration of refugees into the wider Australian society.

Acknowledging the impacts of different types of social networks, Putnam (2000) proposes a distinction between bonding (internal) and bridging (external) social capital. A careful balance between bonding and bridging helps refugees to maintain a balance between heritage-culture retention and host-culture participation, enabling them to acquire a multicultural meaning of integration. The remainder of chapters will explore this and related issues.

Chapter 11

Host Community Context and Language Learning

In the previous chapter I discussed the impact of the strong family and ethnic community on English language learning of adult Bhutanese in both formal and natural contexts. In this chapter, I will examine the influence of their host-community context on their investment in language learning.

The term 'context', as it is understood in this study, is informed by Benson (2011) who defines it as "not simply a location, but also a particular set of circumstances within a location that offers affordances for and constraints on possibilities for language learning" (p.13). Taking the perspective that the context has a "strong and traceable" (Spolsky, 1988) influence in language learning, this chapter will discuss how the framework of context and social relationship enables or limits the learners' investment and progress in acquiring English. Many SLA researchers have contended that although language learning is an individual process, it occurs in a specific social context and thus needs to be understood with reference to the sociocultural factors embedded in the given contexts (Collentine & Freed, 2004; Firth & Wagner, 1997; Norton Pierce, 1995; Spolsky, 1988).

In identifying the dynamic, complex and multiple relationship between immigrant language learners and their outside social context of learning, Norton Pierce (1995) criticizes the SLA theories which define language learners in a fixed binary opposition (such as motivated/unmotivated, introverted/extroverted and inhibited/uninhibited). For her, such affective factors are socially constructed in inequitable relations of power and are therefore "fluid, context-dependent, and context-producing in particular historical and cultural circumstances" (p. 12). Proposing the theory of social investment in relation to SLA, Norton Pierce argues that language learning is influenced by the power relations between the immigrant language learner and their host society (p. 12). She claims that, even when the

learner is highly motivated to learn the target language, the unequal power relations in the society can impact the learner's access to the target language community and thereby the ability to practise the target language. Drawing mainly on this notion of social investment informed by Norton Pierce, this chapter explores how the relationships between Bhutanese refugees and their host-community contexts are linked to their investment in language learning.

I have divided this chapter into seven sections. In section 11.1, I will discuss in brief the language learning contexts for Bhutanese in this study. The second section will examine the opportunities and challenges for language learning in the neighbourhood context. In section 11.3, I will discuss how religious identity facilitated the language learning of Bhutanese Christians in an English-medium church. In section 11.4, I will argue that for language learning to take place in a natural context, the learners need to already have adequate English proficiency so as to engage in the interactions and negotiation of meaning with the English speakers. In section 11.5, I will discuss the significance of non-Bhutanese networks developed through the AMEP for English language practice beyond the classroom setting. In section 11.6, I will explore the opportunities and constraints for language learning in the workplace context. Lastly, the final section will summarize the main points discussed in this chapter.

11.1 Contexts for Language Learning

Context plays a crucial role for natural language learning. Access to English-speaking networks on a regular basis allows refugees to practise their English communicatively and helps to build their confidence in dealing with the social world surrounding them. However, lack of access to such an environment results in separation, marginalization and eventual ghettoization (see section 11.2).

Not all refugees in this study had the same degree of access to an English-speaking environment. For example, the Bhutanese men generally had more access to social environments than the Bhutanese women due to their traditional gender norms that allow men more legitimacy for public conversation. Similarly, it was observed that the Bhutanese who displayed a good command of English had more access to such outside contexts than did the Bhutanese who lacked adequate English.

Furthermore, most Bhutanese found only limited contexts in their everyday social life where they could meet native English speakers and practise their English interactively. For many of them, AMEP was the only place where they were exposed to English on a regular basis. Besides AMEP, English interactions and learning also took place in natural settings such as the neighbourhood, public services, church and workplace. However, access to the verbal and social activities of native English speakers in these contexts was not readily available to all the Bhutanese who desired to engage in intercultural interaction for the purpose of language learning. In the subsequent sections, I will examine each of these contexts in greater detail from a language learning perspective. In this section, I will particularly focus on the language learning contexts available in public places and services.

Public places such as hospitals, shops, public transport and job centres can be prominent sites for offering stimulating English-speaking environments. Nonetheless, the conversations in these contexts were normally short and formulaic for most Bhutanese. Drona commented about his English interaction in shops:

> I sometimes speak English with the white people when shopping. But I don't need to speak much. I go there and search the items I need. Then, I show the items to the cashiers and they scan them. If I don't find the items, I have to ask where the items are. Otherwise, the conversation is just 'hello, hi, how are you, thanks, or see you'.

The content of relations (Garton, Haythornthwaite, & Wellman, 1997) with English speakers in commercial places is grounded in the exchange of goods, services and finances. As such, the conversations were more likely to be routine and limited and did not go beyond

the initial ice-breaking stage. Furthermore, learners in these social environments were not necessarily exposed to comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982) which is essential to language acquisition (Swain, 1985). Respondents often found it difficult to understand Australian colloquialisms and the Australian-accented English used by native speakers in these public places.

11.2 The Neighbourhood Context

In this study, the neighbourhood was an important site of natural language learning for Bhutanese because they were more likely to be surrounded by native English speakers in this context. However, not all Bhutanese experienced the same degree of access to, and acceptance from, their English-speaking neighbours. The Bhutanese who lived in a neighbourhood with a high level of ethnic tolerance had relatively more exposure to English than those who did not. In this section, I will distinguish Hem's neighbourhood from that of other Bhutanese and discuss how the supportive or hostile attitudes and behaviours of native English speakers influenced the natural language learning of Bhutanese in the neighbourhood context.

Unlike other Bhutanese who lived in an ethnic enclave (see chapter 10.2.3), Hem made a deliberate decision to move to a very homogenous white-dominant neighbourhood in the hope that this would offer him opportunities to practice his English in various communicative contexts and thereby get a better understanding of Australia. Hem's family was the only family of his ethnic group in this neighbourhood and therefore his skin colour, physical features and ethnic dress naturally made him very visible to his English-speaking neighbours. In Hem's situation, his "racial visibility" (Colic-Peisker, 2005) yielded positive outcomes for establishing English-speaking social networks. His exposure to the neighbourhood with his distinctly different physical features led the local residents to approach him with curiosity in order to discover his ethnic and personal background. For

Hem, this kind of English-speaking contact was beneficial for his learning of English and integration into Australian society. Hem commented:

> When I walk on the street, the white people often ask me "Where did you come from? Where do you live?" They ask me several questions of this type. My family might be strangers to them because of our dress and skin colour. But this has helped me a lot to practice my English and build a good rapport with them. This has helped me to build my confidence and feel like I am mingling with them. They treat me in a polite manner. They ask me "How is your study? How do you feel about Australia?" They tell me that learning English is difficult and needs a lot of practice. They also encourage and provide support for my learning. When I don't understand any words of English, I ask them and they explain those to me.

Being surrounded by egalitarian native speakers in his neighbourhood gave Hem access to a supportive environment for natural language learning. His social interactions with the native English speakers in authentic and meaningful situations nurtured his confidence in speaking English. Furthermore, his compatible relationship with his neighbours served as an advice network (Krachardt & Hanson, 1993) for his learning of English. This network helped him to reduce his affective filter (Krashen, 1982) such as anxiety and also provided him with motivation and inspiration. From the perspective of social integration, developing friendly ties with mainstream neighbours contributed significantly to his sense of being accepted by and integrated into the society at large.

On the contrary, many other Bhutanese (such as Rama, Drona, Puja and Maya) lived in ethnically-heterogeneous neighbourhoods along with a large number of Anglo-Australians. These Bhutanese inhabitants reported very limited intercultural contact through English with their neighbours. The main problem, they said, was the lack of mutual trust between the Bhutanese and English-speaking residents. Putnam (2007) suggests that "the more ethnically diverse the people we live around, the less we trust them" (p. 147). The inter-ethnic social capital that could be accessed through bridging social networks was very weak among inhabitants in these localities. Respondents reported not having any English-speaking friends or acquaintances with which they could interact and practice their English.

Ethnic homophily was strong among Bhutanese living in these neighbourhoods. See chapter 10.2.3 for the example of homophilic binding of Puja with her ethnic networks. When I personally visited these regions during my field work, I observed several times a quite large number of Bhutanese walking together and speaking to each other in their native language in shops, public transport and on the street. The high level of ethnic embeddedness among Bhutanese in these neighbourhoods was the outcome of not only the overwhelming access of social capital through their internal social networks (see chapter 10.2.3) but also the persistence of racism and opposition from the English speakers surrounding them. The insights emerging from these findings concur with Portes and Sensenbrenner's (1993) study which claims that "the greater the level of prejudice the immigrants encounter from mainstream society, the stronger the sentiments of ethnic homophily among its members" (p.1329).

Respondents blamed the prejudicial attitudes and racist behaviour from mainstream residents as being the major obstacles to intercultural participation through English at the neighbourhood level. Some Bhutanese shared stories of verbal racism and even physical harassment especially from the young adults and teenagers of white skin. Maya reported that she was repeatedly harassed by her English-speaking neighbours who often threw empty cans and bottles at her home and made racist comments such as "Asian dog" or "monkey". Respondents believed that they were racialized and marginalized by English-speaking neighbours because of their relatively limited power in a new society based on their ethnicity, immigration status and language ability.

In summary, access to social and verbal activities of English-speaking neighbours is central to identity development of language learners in the neighbourhood context. However, other than Hem, the Bhutanese in this study did not experience a sufficient degree of access to an open social environment which allowed for investment in English interaction with their

English-speaking neighbours. Many Bhutanese faced racism and resistance from those who were in the position to offer them English language input in real life situations and to engage the novices in meaningful social interactions. As a consequence, the existence of this unsupportive environment not only prevented the Bhutanese from making an investment in their identity as language users in a neighbourhood context but also amplified their ethnic identity. The high level of ethnic homophily and racial prejudice may in turn lead to eventual separation (Berry, 1997) rather than mutual accommodation between the Bhutanese and their receiving society.

11.3 The Church Context

This study considers the Brighton church to be a provider of a supportive environment for natural language learning to the Bhutanese Christians. Aside from its religious significance to the Christian congregation, the church is acknowledged for its contribution to the creation of a bridging link between the otherwise ethnically divided communities. Expressly, the church served as an important social bridge by connecting the Bhutanese with native English speakers. The bridging network established by this church provided the Bhutanese Christians with opportunities for language input and practice, as well as other facilitating tools which assisted with informal language learning.

11.3.1 Church: A community of practice?

Lave and Wenger (1991) consider learning as a socially-situated phenomenon in which newcomers engage with legitimate members of a community, socialize into their practices and develop the competence required to become a full member of the community (p. 65). For Lave and Wenger, learning is a social process by which newcomers transform into full participant of the community of practice. The social practice in learning "involves the whole person" (p. 53), not just the cognitive aspect.

In the case of Bhutanese Christians, belonging to the Christian community gave them a privileged access to English-speaking social networks and their community's activities. All the participating members of this religiously-motivated community shared a set of activities such as preaching, sermons, worship songs and social interactions that were primarily directed towards enhancing their knowledge in Christianity (see chapter 6 for details). For Bhutanese Christians, the new practices of the church created the need for "double socialization" (Li, 2000, p. 61). This meant that, in addition to the socialization into religious and social practices that were novel to the newcomers, they needed to be simultaneously socialized into the linguistic practices of this community. This linguistic socialization was required because English was the legitimate language (Bourdieu, 1991) through which the religious and social practices took place.

Although learning English was not a primary goal in itself for the Bhutanese Christians at the Brighton church, it was a means to increase their participation in the English-mediated religious practices and thereby developing their identity as a functional member of the English-speaking Christian networks and community. Thus, it was through the engagement in linguistic and religious practices, and the associated social interactions with proficient English speakers, that some Bhutanese navigated their way from peripheral to fuller participation over a period of time. Moreover, they also developed their communicative competence in English at the same time. Birkha explained this as:

> It was very challenging in the beginning to participate in the church activities due to lack of English. It was frustrating when I couldn't understand the activities in the church and I could not make them understand what I was talking about. But the one thing that we have in common is the Bible. They have it in English and I have it in Nepali and the truth that they contain is the same. This was one way in which we communicated the ideas about teachings and Christian principles, by using the Scriptures. They read it in English and I read it in Nepali. And then we tended to communicate about this on informal occasions. Sometimes, we used hand gestures and drew the figures on a white board to explain the ideas to each other. Despite the obstacles and challenges, I've gradually improved. They've taught us a lot. Now I can understand 80 percent of the words that they use and explain to them what we want to say.

In this respect, the social context of the Brighton church could be viewed as a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) in which the established members of the community played a supportive and facilitating role in newcomers' identity transformation and learning. The Brighton church offered a rich exposure to English learning input in an authentic situation through various facilitating tools including English songs, bilingual Bible books, English preaching and social interactions. Some Bhutanese who were actively engaged in such linguistic and social practices reported significant progress in their learning in terms of their increasing participation in the church-community activities and with overall improvement in English language skills (see chapters 6.3.2 and 6.4.2.2). However, others indicated frustration for not being able to engage in the church practices (see chapters 6.3.1 and 6.4.2.1). I will discuss how their initial English-speaking ability facilitated or constrained their engagement in more detail in section 11.4. Before that, in the following subsection, I will examine the nature of the relationship between Bhutanese and English-speaking congregants and between the newcomers and old-timers as well as the mechanism that bound them together.

11.3.2 Religious homophily

Respondents reported that the native English speakers belonging to the Brighton church were relatively more welcoming and inclusive to newcomers than English speakers found on the street and in their neighbourhoods. In this communicative context, the relationship between Bhutanese and English-speaking church members was mediated through the mechanism of religious homophily (McPherson et al., 2001). When I asked Paul about the motivation of old-timers for embracing the newcomer Bhutanese as legitimate participants, he referred to the Bible: "In the Bible, it has scripture that says we are taught to make no distinction. Christians believe that the most powerful force is love, and we should show love to everybody in the church without distinction".

The homophilic connection reinforced by religious identity made the intercultural interaction and relationship formation between Bhutanese and English speakers much easier. It reduced the risk and cost of participating in language practices, including social interactions, with the native-English speakers. Many Bhutanese Christians reported that they felt more comfortable speaking English with the native speakers in the church than with those found in other social contexts (see Raju's comment in chapter 6.4.1). Their Christian identity created a greater sense of comfort and nurtured their interethnic interaction.

The native English speakers of the church were more willing to adapt and accept Bhutanese as legitimate peripheral participants (Lave & Wenger, 1991). They were more likely to approach newcomers for social interactions and to assist with making English more comprehensible to non-native speakers. As an example of this, refer to chapter 6.4.1 which illustrates how an English-speaking woman attempted to adjust her vocabulary to the linguistic level of Raju's family. When emphasizing the significance of modified input so as to make it comprehensible to the language learners, Gass and Mackey (2007) argued that "If learners cannot understand the language that is being addressed to them, then that language is not useful" (p. 182). Therefore, gaining access to English speakers who were more likely to offer comprehensible input was significant for the language development and learning of the Bhutanese who otherwise had to deal with Australian slang and colloquial expressions in out-of-church contexts. Manju commented:

> It is much easier for us to understand the English speakers in the church than those outside it. This may be because the English-speaking church members have been dealing with migrants over an extended time. So they speak with us slowly and use very limited slang words. However, the other white people on the street or in the shopping centre speak very fast. It is very hard to understand their English.

In this section, I have discussed how religious identity allowed access to a supportive learning environment for language practice within the church. In the next section, I will

discuss why some Bhutanese, despite having this supportive environment, were not invested (Norton Pierce, 1995) in the English language practices.

11.4 The Interaction Paradox

For the Bhutanese in this study, English was the only legitimate language for participation in linguistic markets (Bourdieu, 1991) and a means of engagement in social and verbal activities with the English-speaking community including the workplace and church. An individual's ability to speak English can be viewed as linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) because he/she can convert it into other forms of capital including a social capital. As such, an individual's competence in English communication plays an important role in determining his/her access to English-speaking social networks and opportunities to practise and learn English. In this section, I will discuss how the learners' English communicative proficiency influences, and is influenced by, social interactions and social networks with native English speakers.

For the Bhutanese in this study, English was both the medium and the outcome of interactions and networks with the native English speakers. They needed to participate in meaningful interactions in English in order to establish English-speaking networks and make investment (Norton Pierce, 1995) in language learning. The confidence gained by the learners through positive interactional experiences expanded potential development of new social networks and also cultivated their English.

For example, the English-medium church offered a rich context for social interactions and social networks with the English speaking congregation. For the Bhutanese who were engaged in these interactions and in meaningful negotiations with the English speakers, it enhanced their confidence in their own use of English and broadened their English-speaking networks (see chapter 6.4.2.2). However, those who did not engage were excluded from this English language-learning experience and were disconnected from English-speaking

networks (see chapters 6.3.1 and 6.4.2.1). It can be argued that the more the learners are engaged in interactions with English speakers, the greater the level of English communicative competence they will attain and the easier it will become to establish new English-speaking networks.

Primarily**,** an adequate initial proficiency in English is necessary to have successful social interactions and to establish social networks with the English speakers. Although some Bhutanese were highly motivated to use and learn English, and they had access to a supportive language-learning environment, they were not invested in the verbal activities of the English-speaking community. This lack of investment was deemed to be associated with their lack of adequate initial proficiency in English.

Narayan's case, as explained in chapter 6.4.2.1, illustrates this. Although a native English speaker attempted to converse with Narayan in an accepting and egalitarian manner, the conversation did not flourish. Communication breakdown occurred due to the fact that the English input offered during the ice-breaking stage of conversation was not comprehensible to Narayan. Narayan was unable to negotiate meaning and take the role of co-interactant due to his inadequate command of English.

Furthermore, Raju's interaction with a native English speaker was limited to a short response to the speaker's initial greeting (see chapter 6.4.1). Alternatively, his daughter appeared to have a meaningful and extended conversation with the same English speaker in the same communicative context. Raju's lack of investment in this specific context was associated partly with his own inadequate proficiency in English and partly with his speaker's unwillingness to try harder to negotiate meaning.

Learners with inadequate English proficiency were therefore paradoxically ensnared in a Catch-22 position (Norton, 2013). English communicative competence could be acquired through participation in meaningful interactions with the English speakers but learners had to

already have adequate communication skills in order to participate in such interactions and negotiation of meaning.

Although some Bhutanese had English language proficiency to the level required for social interactions, and had access to a supportive learning environment, they were unwilling to invest in language practice because they perceived their linguistic ability as insufficient to interact adequately with the English speakers. It was this perceived inability rather than the actual inability that inhibited some Bhutanese from engaging in English language practice. Drona's case illustrates this (as described in chapter 6.4.2.1). Although Drona, an intermediate learner of English, actively took part in the negotiation of meaning with his English-speaking tutor in the AMEP class, he was reluctant to expose his perceived limited English proficiency to native English speakers in the church. Drona felt that he had inadequate communicative competence to claim his "right to speak" (Norton Pierce, 1995, p. 25) with the English speakers in this particular context. As a consequence, Drona remained disengaged from English language practice and disconnected from English-speaking social networks.

Opportunities for learners to cultivate their English were determined by the amount of linguistic capital they already possessed. Findings show that the Bhutanese with limited linguistic capital (whether perceived or actual) were less invested in the verbal and social activities of the English-speaking community. This was despite the fact that they had access to a supportive learning environment. This limited linguistic capital not only constrained English language learning but also amplified the sentiment of ethnic homophily. For example, Harka gravitated towards his ethnic enclave due to the fact that he had an overwhelming access of internal social capital there and also because he faced challenges by his inadequate English proficiency (see chapter 7.4).

11.5 The AMEP-Based Cross-Ethnic Networks

In this section, I will examine the nature of social relations between Bhutanese and non-Bhutanese students in two distinct classroom contexts, mainly from the perspective of social interactions through English. I will then suggest that the cross-ethnic relations based on multiple social affiliations offered greater opportunities to use English as a lingua franca in a wide range of communicative contexts.

11.5.1 The cross-ethnic networks based on gender: The AMEP beginners' class

For Bhutanese in the beginners' class, gender was among the most influencing factors that largely governed the structure of cross-ethnic relations (see chapter 4.3). Many Bhutanese in this class tended to make social connections with the non-Bhutanese who were like them in terms of gender.

Gender homophily (McPherson et al., 2001) was an important source of influence on their seating arrangements, selection of peers for group work and participation in intercultural interactions. Most Bhutanese men and women in this class tended to sit near those of their same gender and preferred to choose someone of the same sex for group activities. They also participated more actively and confidently in class activities when their cross-ethnic partners were homogenous in terms of gender identity (see chapter 4.3).

The gender-related homophilic interactions were the outcome of not only the preference of the individual student but also the homosocial norm (Mehta & Strough, 2009) within which the Bhutanese were deeply embedded. The homosocial norm encouraged same-sex friendships. Consequently, the Bhutanese who had been socialized into this norm since childhood felt they were unable to take the risk of developing new social relationships with opposite-sex cross-ethnic peers as, by doing so, it would trigger feelings of shyness and elicit social criticism (see chapter 4.3). Hem explained this:

> I feel quite shy to talk to the women or sit together with them. But it is not so much a problem to interact with Bhutanese women because we can speak in Nepali and we

> also have close contact outside the class. But it is quite difficult to approach and talk to non-Bhutanese women. I don't know their culture. For example, the Muslim women don't talk to men other than their husbands. It is also due to our culture. In our culture, people think of it negatively or they criticize me if I have intimate relationships with women other than family members, friends, or relatives.

Although gender homophily was a key determinant of inter-ethnic network formation, it was not as strong as ethnic homophily in terms of the intensity of social contacts. Most Bhutanese men and women preferred to seek academic support from their co-ethnic peers of the opposite gender rather than from cross-ethnic peers of the same gender.

11.5.2 The cross-ethnic networks based on multiplex ties: The AMEP intermediate class

The influence of gender homophily on inter-ethnic social relations was relatively minimal among Bhutanese in the intermediate class as compared to those in the beginners' class. Although gender undoubtedly played a part, it was not the sole factor affecting the structure of their cross-ethnic networks. For example, Manju, a Bhutanese female, tended to socialize more with Osman, a Sudanese male, than with Fatima who was an Afghan female (see chapter 5.4).

In the intermediate class, the tendency among Bhutanese was to make more frequent contact with Sudanese and Korean classmates rather than with the Afghans. Their social connections with Koreans and Sudanese were not mediated through one specific homophilic mechanism. Many of them were connected to one another through multiple ties (Kadushin & Kadushin, 2012) and multiple identities. Manju felt most comfortable speaking English with Lee due to the fact that she identified with her along religious lines (as a Christian friend), in gender (as a female) and demographically (as a neighbour). Puja developed a friendly rapport with Sayed, a Sudanese male, because of other relationships shared in common such as Sayed being her parents' neighbour and her brother's friend. Similarly, Drona often engaged in friendly interactions with Osman because they were similar in age and gender dimensions.

Furthermore, Bhutanese and Sudanese were more or less homogenous in terms of the way they spoke English, sharing similar features of interaction style such as speed of speaking, non-native accent and intonation pattern (see chapter 5.4). Conversely, the Bhutanese and Afghans were relatively heterogeneous according to the characteristics they shared.

11.5.3 Uniplex versus multiplex relationships

The quality of the relationships that the Bhutanese developed with their non-Bhutanese classmates was a significant factor in determining the likelihood of English language practice beyond the classroom context. Findings show that the non-Bhutanese networks which involved multiplex ties were more profitable for English language practice than the non-Bhutanese networks involving uniplex ties. The non-Bhutanese networks which operated with high multiplexity offered greater opportunities for investing in English in a wide range of communicative contexts and roles.

The friendly relations Manju developed with Lee through multiple identities enabled her to practice English with Lee in a wide range of communicative contexts. Manju explained:

> I feel more comfortable speaking English with Lee than with other non-Bhutanese friends in my class. I meet her in different places like the church, the supermarket and even in the neighbourhood, and we engage in social interactions in English. I also sometimes talk to her through Facebook on different issues. She recently gave birth to a baby, and we talked about her baby's health. A few months ago I had a car accident and got into trouble. I then asked her for her advice about the legal procedure. We also talk about the church and about our study. If I am not going to the church or if I have any problems, I text her or message her via Facebook.

Manju practised her English with Lee as a lingua franca by adapting a range of supportive identities in multiple social contexts. Manju's multiple relationships with Lee (such as a Christian friend, neighbour, same-sex classmate) allowed her to use English in the contexts of classroom, neighbourhood, church, supermarket, and through Facebook. The

multiplex nature of their relationship also contributed to the strengthening of trust and to generating social capital in the forms of mutual support and advice.

Like Manju, Puja developed multiple forms of association with Sayed that offered her opportunities to practice English with him in multiple communicative contexts. In fact, Sayed was the only non-Nepali speaking friend with whom Puja often practised her spoken English beyond the classroom. Although Puja referred to herself as a shy woman who was deeply embedded in her own ethnic network, she still felt comfortable speaking English with Sayed. This suggests that, if interpersonal contacts are mediated through multiple horizontal relationships, a learner's affective filters (Krashen, 1982) such as anxiety and shyness will be reduced when practicing English with those whom they have such relationships.

On the contrary, respondents in the beginner's class did not avail themselves of such opportunities to practice English. This was due to the structure of their cross-ethnic connections which were mainly governed by a single, gender-homophilic mechanism. As such, their English language practice with non-Bhutanese classmates was usually confined to the context of academic interactions with their same-sex peers.

It was evident that non-Bhutanese networks, characterized by multiplex ties, nurtured the intercultural interactions in the classroom and also offered opportunities to use English interactively in out-of-class contexts such as in the neighbourhood, religious places and through social media. Consequently, developing such non-Nepali speaking networks which extend contacts beyond the confines of the classroom was proved crucial for the Bhutanese in order to increase their investment (Norton Pierce, 1995) in English in everyday social situations.

11.6 The Workplace Context

I will discuss how Hari was socialized into the new linguistic and socio-cultural environment of the workplace. Data from Hari's case study suggests that the workplace is an

important site for English language socialization for refugees and immigrants in Australia. However, language learning in this context occurs in a relatively unsupportive and complex environment (Li, 2000; Norton Pierce, 1995).

I will split this section into two subsections. In subsection 11.6.1, I will argue that language learning in a workplace social context requires the need for learning the legitimate variety of language that is deemed acceptable by the dominant speakers of that language. In subsection 11.6.2, I will examine the influences of context and identity on Hari's investment in language learning.

11.6.1 Learning the legitimate variety of English

Hari's new job as a service attendant in a petrol station required the need for his double socialization (Li, 2000). In addition to learning the technical aspects of the new job, Hari needed to be socialized into workplace English which was distinct from the English he had been exposed to before. Hari explained this in the following quote:

> I don't know how to speak with the English-speaking customers in the workplace. I don't know anything. Their speaking style is very different. The way the English-speaking people speak English in the workplace is very different from the way the English-speaking people in the school speak English. In the school, I could understand when the teachers spoke English. But the English-speaking customers speak very fast. They use a lot of slang words and technical English.

Although Hari had been surrounded in an English environment for over five years and had had exposure to English in a range of contexts including formal language learning, he felt marginalized when he needed to speak in the discourse community of the workplace. Data from his narrative stories suggest that this was mainly due to his lack of "legitimate competence" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 55) in the technical and colloquial variety of English typically used by English-speaking customers in workplace situations. For example, Hari resorted to silence in a communicative event when he did not understand a native speaker who had said, "Can I have a twenty stick choice gold cigarette?" (see chapter 8.6).

Bourdieu (1991), emphasized the significance of legitimate competence required by speakers as, "Speakers lacking the legitimate competence are de facto excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required, or are condemned to silence" (p.55). Bourdieu further claimed that a person's linguistic competence can be converted to linguistic capital only when it is recognized and valued in the linguistic market in which the person desires to speak.

Hari's inability to understand and speak the legitimate variety of English raised his affective filter (Krashen, 1982) including anxiety, humiliation and shyness (see chapter 8.6). His conversation with his target language speakers became diminished by his perceived inferiority and was further aggravated by the power imbalance between him and his English-speaking customers due to the unequal linguistic and cultural capital they possessed. As a consequence, this increased Hari's sense of risk and his reluctance to expose his English to native English speakers during the initial stages of his workplace language socialization (Duff, 2007; Li, 2000). Hari perceived his identity as an illegitimate English speaker based on the difficulties experienced in interactions with his customers (see chapter 8.6).

Nevertheless, Hari gradually gained some command of legitimate English through social interactions with the legitimate English speakers. As he progressively became more familiar with work-specific English (including Australian slang and colloquialisms), his utterances during communicative interactions were validated by English speakers with whom Hari also had material investment (Norton, 1995). On one occasion, Hari felt encouraged to speak when a customer made a positive comment on his use of the colloquial expression "Oi, what the bloody hell is that!" Hari's colloquial use of English was acknowledged by the customer relating it to a sign of his linguistic assimilation (see chapter 8.6). Therefore, the value of Hari's linguistic competence was dependent not only on his linguistic capacity to

produce grammatically correct utterances but also on his social capacity to appropriate his utterances in the given linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1991).

Hari's positive interactional experiences lowered his affective filter for using more complex English. His language learning progressed as he developed his new identity conducive to the linguistic market. Hari's newly acquired linguistic competence enabled him to exercise symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1977) in communicative events - a power that allowed him to create more opportunities to speak and engage native speakers in conversation.

Drawing on the findings from Hari's language socialization, it can be argued that, for immigrant language learners, the learning of English in a natural context entails mastering the legitimate variety of English used by the dominant speakers in the particular social contexts. From a novice speaker of the legitimate English used at his workplace, Hari was socialized into the localized English accents, colloquialisms and workplace genres which were essential for carrying out the communicative functions involving English-speaking customers. His learning of the legitimate English of his workplace also contributed to his sense of belonging to that community. Colic-Peisker (2002) stressed this importance in a similar study of Croatian immigrants to Western Australia. She found that the immigrants who did not acquire the idiomatic expressions and the Anglo communicative style of the locals were dissociated from their sense of belonging to that Australian community. Findings also suggest that interactions with English target language speakers were crucial for the successful learning of legitimate English. Although Hari was caught in a Catch-22 position at the initial stage of his language socialization, his language learning gradually progressed over time through his participation in routine interactions with the legitimate English speakers.

11.6.2 Context, identity and investment

Drawing on Norton Pierce's (1995) notion of investment in SLA, in this subsection I will argue that Hari's investment in language learning varied considerably depending on

social contexts and identity. Although Hari was motivated to practise and learn English through conversation with the English speakers in his workplace, he was not necessarily invested in practising the English language in certain social environments.

Some scholars have argued that many of the low-paying entry level jobs that newly arriving immigrants typically hold in their receiving countries are isolated linguistically and usually offer very little or no opportunity to be socialized into the host-country language (Roberts, 2010; Waldinger & Lichter, 2003). However, this was not true in Hari's case. Hari felt compelled to develop adequate English communication skills so as to perform his employment tasks such as responding to English-speaking customers' requests and acting on his senior co-worker's instructions (see chapter 8.6). Due to such stipulations, Hari considered the learning of legitimate English to be a significant determinant of retaining his job and securing economic advantage. In other words, his motivation for learning English in the workplace arose from his desire to accumulate linguistic capital for the purpose of securing economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The social interactions with his co-worker, manager and customers were the social contexts for Hari's language learning.

As such, Hari's investment in language practices did not always appear to be consistent with his motivation to speak and learn English. His participation in oral discourse varied depending on the contexts and how he perceived his status and identity with reference to those with whom he intended to interact. For example, Hari perceived himself as a legitimate speaker when interacting with his senior co-worker but, conversely, identified himself as an illegitimate speaker in his interactions with his boss.

Hari felt most uncomfortable and consciously avoided speaking with David, his English-speaking manager, because he perceived David as having the greater power in their institutional relationship and believed that silence was a way of showing obedience to and respect for his boss (see chapter 8.5). On the contrary, Hari's silence was perceived by David

as lacking motivation to engage in language practices. Conversely, Hari felt quite comfortable speaking English with Arvind, his senior co-worker, despite the fact that Arvind possessed a substantially greater quantity of linguistic, cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) in the institutional context. From the L2 socialization perspective (Duff, 2007), it was Arvind who served as an expert of new socio-cultural practices and he scaffolded Hari's linguistic and cultural socialization. Hari's positive interactions with Arvind were further encouraged by a strong horizontal relationship created through other mutual interests which included having occasional conversations about the Hindi film industry - Hindi being Arvind's native language (see chapter 8.5).

Hari's level of comfort and investment in English was also dependent on how the English speakers treated him in the specific social context. Hari was reluctant to converse with customers who treated him with disrespect, impatience, intolerance and hostility. He considered these to be "unfriendly customers" (see chapter 8.7). Hari's affective filter (Krashen, 1982) such as nervousness and fear was high in such unsupportive social situations, resulting in lack of motivation and insufficient self-confidence to practise his English with them. He stated, "When I have to interact with unfriendly people, I make more errors". Hari did not resist the prejudice and hostility shown by unfriendly customers due to the fact that his symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991) was diluted by his inferior identities (illegitimate English speaker and immigrant) in the workplace environment. Instead, Hari consciously decided to be silenced or to minimize his use of English in such unfavourable social contexts. In contrast, Hari was more invested in English in situations where he was treated with respect, tolerance and compassion (see chapter 8.7). In these instances, Hari's affective filter was lowered and he became more willing to converse with those who he called "friendly customers". For example, on one occasion Hari held a five minute conversation (his longest English interaction ever) with a sympathetic English-speaking customer. His

decision to participate in this lengthy exchange was due to the fact that Hari felt recognized as a valued speaker of English by the supportive customer who had the discursive power (Norton Pierce, 1995) to decide the continuance or closure of their conversation.

Findings from Hari's workplace language learning suggest that the learners' motivation and investment (Norton Pierce, 1995) in language learning need to be understood with reference to the particular social context in which they find themselves. Hari made the conscious decision to speak or not to speak in a particular situation for the reason of his self-perceived identity or socially-ascribed identity within the given context. Hari felt comfortable and was more invested in English in the context of where he perceived himself as a legitimate English speaker. He also became more invested in English in a context where he was treated as a legitimate co-interactant by the target language speaker.

11.7 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented a detailed investigation of natural language learning of adult Bhutanese refugees, with a particular focus on social contexts in which the language learning occurred. Findings show that language learning for refugees was interwoven with multiple social contexts such as workplace, public places, church, neighbourhood and social networks adapted from the AMEP class. In most of these contexts, the Bhutanese as English language learners were surrounded by native English speakers who could provide them with authentic language input for English language practice and engage with them in interactions and negotiation of meaning. However, being surrounded by English speakers did not necessarily result in sufficient exposure to English language use. Although some Bhutanese were motivated to practise their English when surrounded by English speakers, they were not invested in language practices in certain social contexts. The nature of language learning was therefore context specific and context dependent.

The success or failure of English language learners was dependent on whether or not they had access to a supportive environment which encouraged them to speak and practise their English. Hem's language learning progressed well in the neighbourhood context because he was surrounded by supportive native English speakers who often engaged him in social interactions in an accepting and welcoming manner. Conversely, other Bhutanese who were surrounded by unwelcoming and unsupportive English-speaking neighbours were excluded from language-learning opportunities in the neighbourhood context. Likewise, Hari was more invested in English in workplace contexts where he was treated with respect and tolerance than in situations where he was treated with intolerance and prejudice.

Norton Pierce (1995), in her seminal study, has argued that the natural language-learning context is often marked by racist, sexist and homophilic practices due to the prevailing power relations between the immigrant language learners and the target language speakers. However, the findings from this study show that, despite the existence of power imbalance in terms of social identity and linguistic capital, the relationships between them were more likely to be fluid and context specific. As such, some natural language-learning contexts were experienced as including and others as excluding.

The presence of homophily (McPherson, 2001) played a significant role in creating a supportive environment for intercultural interactions and English language exposure. Findings suggest that learners were more likely to have positive interactional experiences with English speakers who were similar to them in characteristics such as religion, gender and/or age. For example, the Bhutanese Christians had access to a supportive environment for English language practice with native English-speaking congregants because, in this context, their interethnic relationships were mediated through religious homophily. Findings also showed that multiplex relationships with the target language speakers offered greater opportunities for language practice in multiple social contexts. Manju tended to practise her

English with Lee in a wide range of contexts because she was connected with Lee through multiple social affiliations.

Findings show that interaction with English speakers was an essential condition for successful language learning. The Bhutanese who were engaged in meaningful interactions with native English speakers over a period of time not only improved their English communicative competence but also developed new identities as legitimate English speakers. Conversely, those who were not engaged in such practices were marginalized and disconnected from English speaking social networks. Findings also suggest that interactions with legitimate English speakers enabled language learners to acquire the legitimate variety of English conducive to the given linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1991). For example, it was through his interactions with English-speaking customers, and with his co-worker, that Hari acquired the colloquial English needed for his work environment which was distinct from the English he was exposed to during his high school.

Findings reveal that adequate English communication skills are a necessary condition for participation in interactions and English language learning in natural contexts. This study revealed that the Bhutanese who had inadequate initial English proficiency were also those who were not invested (Norton Pierce, 1995) in the language practices despite the fact that they had access to a supportive learning environment.

In conclusion, successful language learning in natural context was partly derived from the learner's own efforts and partly from the social contexts they were situated in. Factors such as high ethnic homophily, limited initial English proficiency and unsupportive social environments constrained successful language learning. In contrast, factors such as supportive environment, homophilic binding with native English speakers and multiple cross-ethnic relationships facilitated language learning.

Chapter 12

Classroom Language Learning

This chapter examines the language learning experience of Bhutanese students in the classroom context, with particular emphasis on factors that facilitated and constrained their engagement in intended language-learning tasks. This chapter also sheds light on how the students' cultural norms that are confronting to classroom practices and their perceptions of teacher's scaffolding behaviour influenced their participation in instructional activities that aimed to facilitate the promotion of their autonomy in their learning.

This chapter is divided into six sections. Section 12.1 contextualizes the issue of student non-participation in oral English lessons by drawing on some theoretical insights and my own classroom observations. Section 12.2 discusses how the socio-historical factors were intertwined with the issue of classroom participation in oral discourse activities. Section 12.3 explores the issue further by examining the impact of cultural, linguistic and contextual factors on oral participation of students in small-group discussion. Section 12.4 particularly examines the influence of students' perceptions of teacher's scaffolding behaviour on their participation in desired learning activities. Section 12.5 explores the gap between the English language learning needs of the students and their actual learning experience in the AMEP class, and its influence on their investment in language learning process. The final section summarizes the key points discussed in the chapter.

12.1 Classroom Silence: An Overview

It was evident from the data that most of the Bhutanese students in both classes were generally reticent in language practices that aimed to foster their English oral communication skills. The oral participation of Bhutanese in whole-class discussion was generally low compared to other non-Bhutanese groups. For instance, in the intermediate English class, out of the total of 254 turns produced in six different instances of teacher-student exchanges, ten

Bhutanese took only 21 turns altogether, whereas the other ten non-Bhutanese took 110 turns (see chapter 5.3).

Many Bhutanese labelled themselves as "shy" persons and admitted that they tended to behave more passively than their non-Bhutanese counterparts. Furthermore, both teachers involved in this study characterized Bhutanese as unmotivated and shy, lacking self-determination skills and self-confidence for active participation. Tanya, the teacher of beginners' English class, commented:

> Something quite obvious, I have become aware of . . . I have been teaching a long time, teaching in state system all levels. I have basically taught every nationality, all ages, all backgrounds. One thing that really struck me about Bhutanese was, unfortunately, levels of motivation and shyness . . . I thought and I have observed in comparison. I really don't know where that's coming from. It could be some backgrounds, some cultures, perhaps educational system doesn't place as much emphasis on developing autonomy in learning and self-direction. I have noticed that sometimes the motivation levels from themselves can be quite low. Quite often they will ask less questions than other students will.

Studies (such as Swain, 1995; Swain & Lapkin, 1995) have stressed the importance of students' active oral participation for the development of their L2 proficiency. In explaining the L2 learning from the output perspective, Swain (1995) suggests that language acquisition is more successful when learners are pushed to produce the target language in spoken and written form, rather than simply letting them receive the language input through listening and reading activities. Similarly, sociocultural theory implies that language is learned through interaction with more experienced others who can support novices to move toward "greater self-regulation through the new language" (Lantolf, 2000, p. 210). Regardless of the perspective taken, L2 learners' inexpressive classroom behaviours such as reticence, shyness, withdrawal and passivity are seen as hindrances to the development of their communicative competence in the target language.

Student silence in the classroom has received increasing attention in the L2 literature. Tsui (1996), for instance, explains learner reticence in L2 classes by exploring mainly the

affective factors such as language learning anxiety, fear of making a mistake and lack of self-confidence. Other factors contributing to L2 learner's silence, as pointed out by previous researchers, are issues of identity and difference (Duff, 2002), cultural unfamiliarity and power dynamics (Zhou, Knoke, & Sakamoto, 2005) and gender and racial biases (Norton, 2013).

However, the reticence of Bhutanese students in the AMEP classrooms was not the outcome of one single factor, but was the resultant of the combination of social, cultural, historical, pedagogical and contextual forces. The non-participation of a Bhutanese in a particular context had different underlying meanings, which thus needs to be understood from the multidimensional point of view. Furthermore, a commonly-held assumption by the teachers that the Bhutanese students were shy, reticent and unmotivated did not appear evident in all L2 learning contexts. The students who were reticent in one context were relatively more active in another. For instance, Maya was outspoken in whole-class discussions, but she appeared reticent to interact with a Burmese male student (see chapter 4.3). Now, I will discuss each of these factors in detail below, starting with socio-historical factor.

12.2 Sociohistorical Factors and Classroom Silence

Unlike other students who immigrated to Australia as economic migrants, many Bhutanese in this study had a prolonged history of silence in everyday social lives. Their silence and fatalism had been imposed on them by political, cultural, social and economic forces associated with protracted refugee situations. Moreover, the minority groups such as women, lower-caste families, illiterates and underprivileged Bhutanese had experienced further exclusion and oppression due to the influences of prevailing discriminatory norms and practices. The education system they had undergone before had instilled the norm of silence in the classroom setting. Khem, the Bhutanese community leader, explained:

> Living 20 years in the refugee camp, what we learned is to get ration every fortnight, do some labour work and just survive. Our culture and our life in the refugee camp didn't teach us how to deal with public, how to speak in front of people or how to express in a confident manner. In the refugee camp, we were not allowed to speak in front of government officers, in front of seniors and people who exercised more power in the society. This fostered a sense of inferiority, a sense of dependency and a fear of making mistake. If I made a mistake, people would laugh at me. We are not accustomed to 'have a go' culture. So we still have that fear, that attitude and that practice.

Here, Bourdieu's (1990) notion of "habitus" (p. 53) offers a useful concept to contextualize the impact of sociohistorical factors on classroom participation. Bourdieu defines habitus as an embodied system of "durable, transposable dispositions" (p. 53) that are the product of historical experiences. The internalized dispositions regulate the way an individual perceives, thinks and acts in the social world. However, the individual's habitus can be transformed over time through countertraining (see section 12.4.2) because habitus is "durable but not eternal" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 133).

Many Bhutanese who had grown up in the isolated refugee camps in the remote areas of Nepal formed their habitus within that sociocultural environment. Their perceptions of the social world and their actions were shaped, to a large extent, by their experiences of social isolation, cultural marginalization, gender and caste discrimination and a dependency way of life. The prolonged exposure to oppressive environments may have led many of the former refugees to internalize the dispositions of passivity, inferiority, shyness, dependency and reticence. This indicates that their refugee habitus was likely to be one of the important factors inhibiting their ability to adopt the active self-determination strategies for oral participation in classroom discussion. I will illustrate this further in the next subsection with an example of two students: Rama and Maya.

12.2.1 An example of sociohistorical factors influencing oral participation

Regardless of their oral English proficiency level, all Bhutanese students from both classes, except Maya and Hem, felt challenged to participate in discussions in whole-class

contexts. The students mentioned a wide variety of reasons for their reticence during such teacher-fronted discussions including: English language inadequacy, shyness, lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes and fear of being ostracized by peers (see chapters 4.5 and 5.3). My observations further reveal that such discussions were often characterized by a restrictive IRE (initiation, response, evaluation) teaching exchange where the teachers talked more than all the students did together. Nonetheless, these reasons do not adequately explain why Maya and Hem were relatively more assertive than others; or why Maya contributed 43 turns in whole-class discussions, whereas Rama did not utter even a single word. In order to unfold this rather complex issue and get a better insight, it is worthwhile to explore their personal and family histories. I will now discuss how two Bhutanese women, Maya and Rama, with highly homologous but distinct personal histories, exhibited notable variation in their oral participation in whole-class discussions.

Although both Maya and Rama were less invested in classroom-based learning due to their compliance and commitment to traditional gender norms (see chapter 10.2.1), Maya appeared considerably more verbal and assertive in discussions involving the whole class. She was the most frequent speaker among all other Bhutanese, often initiated interactions with the teacher and took nearly one fourth (43 out of 191) of all the conversational turns that were devoted to students in whole-class discussions (see chapter 4.5). In contrast, Rama was extremely reticent to ask and answer questions during the class and contribute to the classroom discussions. She generally remained quiet unless she was called on to speak by the teacher or the learning tasks required her to speak. She did not utter any single word during any discussion that occurred between the teacher and students in a whole-class setting (see chapter 4.5).

One might assume that the element underlying Rama's reticence was a personality factor associated with language anxiety, shyness and introversion. Rama described herself as

a “shy” and “dull” person with a lack of social competence and skills to speak in public. However, the analysis of life-history data led me to contend that this was not simply shyness or introversion without source. Habitus, the product of the internalization of experiences in one social context, can be perpetuated and transposed onto life within the new social context (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2014). Rama seemed to have acquired and internalized such dispositions through early and ongoing gender-biased socialization practices at the family and community level.

When asked about the sources of their shyness or extroversion, both women pointed to their pre-migration personal histories as a main factor influencing their self-confidence. Rama commented:

> In the refugee camp also, I was a shy woman. I used to work in the kitchen and never went outside the camp. I always felt inferior to other people. My parents were also illiterate and did not tend to talk to other people. After I married, my duty was to take care of family members and home. So I had rarely had the opportunity to talk to the people other than family and close friends. My husband spoke on behalf of other family members because he was educated. So I don’t know how to talk to people in public settings. I feel like if I say something, it will come out wrong. Therefore, I try to avoid speaking, especially in contexts where the teacher and all the students discuss things together.

However, unlike Rama, Maya reported different pre-migration history:

> In the refugee camp also, usually I didn’t stay at home. I used to go outside and earn money. People would say that, in Nepal, only men should work - not the women. But I didn’t care. Sometimes I had to work together with many people. I often had to chat with them. We would go together to work outside. That’s why I don’t feel hesitation to talk to other people. I don’t feel fear.

In considering habitus as a compilation of a person’s individual and collective history, Reay (2004) notes that the “habitus, within, as well as between, social groups, differs to the extent that the details of individuals’ social trajectories diverge from one another” (p. 434). Despite commonalities on the grounds of gender, age, education and refugee background, the pre-migration socialization experiences of Rama and Maya were somewhat different in regards to the parameters of their social participation, exposure and interaction. Having been

raised in a socially isolated, poorly educated and gender structured family, Rama had remained enclosed within the patriarchal boundaries of the household in all spheres of her life, with limited opportunities for interaction with people other than her family and intimate friends. In contrast, Maya had been accustomed to speaking with outsiders of the family and friends circle from her personal experiences in working with several construction labourers from diverse age and racial backgrounds of the community. Thus, the habitus that the two women had internalized from their pre-migration experiences seemed to have a significant influence on shaping their classroom performance in relation to their oral participation in whole-class discussions.

12.3 Participation in Small-Group Discussion

Due to their common fear of making errors and being humiliated in front of whole class and teachers, the majority of Bhutanese preferred small-group discussion over whole-class discussion. They stated that working in small groups would allow them the chance to practise their oral English in a less threatening environment. Raju commented:

> I feel more comfortable participating in small groups than participating in whole-class discussion. In the whole-class discussion setting, I fear that I may make mistakes and other students will laugh at my mistakes. But the small-group discussion gives more opportunity to practice English with other friends.

Here, students' recognition of their learning obstacles and their ability to identify the ways to improve their oral participation can be viewed as an example of their autonomy at the awareness level. Holec (1981) suggests that autonomous learners "assume responsibility for determining the purpose, content, rhythm and method of their learning, monitoring its progress and evaluating its outcomes" (p. 3). Like Raju, many other respondents stated their preference for small-group activities and showed their awareness that small-group discussion could provide them more opportunities for oral English practice than whole-class discussion.

A significant body of research in L2 teaching advocates for small-group discussion, by indicating that the group discussion based on cooperative learning principle induces better

learning than traditional teacher-fronted whole-class discussion (e.g. Liang, Mohan, & Early, 1998; McGroarty, 1989; Oxford, 1997;). The proponents of this orientation argue that small-group discussion allows students to practise their oral English in a lower risk-taking environment and offers them greater opportunities for English interactions. Additionally, Littlewood (1999) suggests that cooperative learning organized around small group of students may operate autonomy in four domains: communicating, collaborating, performing tasks and learning (see Littlewood, 1999 for details).

Regardless of variation in their teaching styles (see section 12.4), both teachers in this study incorporated a variety of group-oriented activities in their instruction in a way that encouraged students to practise their English in cooperative environments. Examples include small group or pair discussions, problem-solving tasks and information-gap activities. By breaking the class into small-group discussions, Peter aimed to foster positive interdependence among his students so that they could learn cooperatively from each other. He asserted, "It's all about cooperation, respect, and understanding so that they build together, not just an individual builds their skills". This intention is consistent with the conceptual approach to cooperative learning, which is defined as the "instructional use of small groups in which students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (Johnson & Johnson, 1999, p. 5).

However, simply placing students into small groups did not increase verbal participation of all Bhutanese students in all types of group discussion contexts. The prevailing barriers of shyness and lack of self-confidence were compounded by cultural and other types of obstacles. Although the students expressed a desire to develop their communicative autonomy (see section 12.4.1 for the definition) through participation in small-group discussion, they experienced cultural and structural barriers that inhibited the autonomy from developing. This can thus be understood as a tension between their

preference for participation in small-group discussion and confronting cultural and linguistic barriers that hindered them from participating. In the following subsections, I will discuss the influence of these factors in detail.

12.3.1 Ambivalence of comfort and discomfort in an ethnically homogenous group

When it came to the formation of groups for cooperative learning, sometimes both AMEP teachers allowed their students to take some responsibility for choosing their partners for group and pair work. Giving this choice to students may contribute positively to their sense of self-control, yet this alone may not be sufficient to develop their autonomy in learning (Stefanou, Perencevich, DiCintio, & Turner, 2004). However, in such choice situations, the students showed a greater inclination to choose their discussion partners from their own ethnicity and gender. It seemed obvious that they felt comfortable working in homogenous groups than in heterogeneous groups. Consequently, this often resulted in groups consisting of only Bhutanese, thereby perpetuating their tendency to overuse their ethnic language as a communication tool in English learning situations (see chapter 4.2.1). This paradox can thus be interpreted as a tension between giving responsibility to students for managing their own learning and engaging them in oral English practice during group discussions.

The students were aware that their oral English proficiency would be improved by practising to speak to each other in English rather than in their ethnic language, but they were often reluctant to do so due to confronting cultural norms and fear of being ostracized by their peers. So, although the students felt comfortable working in groups that were ethnically homogenous, they were at the same time worried that their investment in English communication skills was constrained by the presence of their ethnic networks. Their conflicting feelings of comfort and discomfort can be viewed as what Block (2007) calls "ambivalence" (p. 864). Block describes ambivalence as "mutually conflicting feelings of

love and hate" and "uncertainty of feeling a part and feeling apart" (p. 864). The students' ambivalent feelings with regard to their relationships with their ethnic peers impeded the amount and scope of choice (Block, 2007) available to them to practise their oral English.

Although the opportunity for the development of communicative autonomy was constrained in ethnically homogenous groups, other aspects of autonomy such as spontaneous collaboration for task performance (Littlewood, 1999) operated strongly. The students tended to seek help from their co-ethnic peers when something in a lesson was not understood or to check the spelling or meaning of unfamiliar words (see chapters 4.2.1 and 5.2.2). This kind of collaborative learning independent of the teacher can be considered as what Littlewood (1999) refers to as a "reactive autonomy" (p. 76). Littlewood suggests that the reactive autonomy "stimulates learners to learn vocabulary without being pushed . . . or to organize themselves into groups in order to cover the reading" (p. 76).

12.3.2 Linguistic and cultural confrontations in a heterogeneous group

Oxford (1997) stresses the need for heterogeneous grouping to foster the cooperative learning in the class. Oxford suggests that the structured forms of heterogeneous grouping promotes the intercultural relations among students. In accordance with this advice, both AMEP teachers often formed the groups in ways that ensured that each group had a mix of students in terms of gender and ethnicity. However, many Bhutanese in such heterogeneous grouping encountered challenges to their active oral participation due to factors related to linguistic and cultural issues.

Some Bhutanese in the intermediate English class were reluctant and unwilling to work in groups that included Afghan students. They noted that the Afghan students spoke with a different type of accent which they found difficult to understand (see chapter 5.4). Similarly, the Bhutanese in the beginners' English class found it even more difficult to negotiate meaning and engage communicatively in cooperative practices with peers from

different L1-speaking backgrounds. McGroarty (1989) claims that in cooperative learning arrangements the more competent English learners are likely to provide scaffolding for the less competent English learners by making their spoken English comprehensible and relevance. However, this claim does not extend to a situation where both learners from different L1 backgrounds have an inadequate initial command of English. For instance, Rama and Thi, both being beginner English learners from different L1 backgrounds, failed to negotiate the meaning in a cooperative group work due to their joint inadequacy in English (see chapter 4.2.1). As such, the inability to understand and communicate with their cross-ethnic peers was likely to perpetuate their reticence during heterogeneous peer conversations rather than the enhancement of positive interdependence.

Moreover, some Bhutanese identified a cultural issue related to cross-sex friendship as a hindrance to their active verbal participation in heterogeneous cooperative learning contexts. The Bhutanese, accustomed to the norm of sex-based segregation in their everyday social lives outside the classroom, felt hesitation and awkwardness to participate in the interaction with cross-sex peers from unfamiliar cultures. The influence of this homo-social norm was prevailing particularly among Bhutanese in the beginners' English class (see chapter 4.3). Rama felt less anxious and was more willing to speak in a small-group discussion than in a whole-class discussion. However, her shyness and reticence were exacerbated in the group work with non-Bhutanese peers of opposite sex. According to Mehta and Strough (2009), the homosocial norm that encourages sex-segregated friendship across the life span is stronger in those who are married because of the fact that having other-sex friends who are not friends of their spouse arouse suspicion, jealousy and a hint of infidelity. In line with the claim of Mehta and Strough, the majority of students who were reticent with cross-ethnic peers of opposite sex reported the feelings of awkwardness and fear of negative judgement because of the social taboos surrounding cross-sex friendship (see

chapter 4.3). However, the homosocial norm did not seem to be a significant influencing factor in their social interaction within their own cultural group. Perhaps this may be due to them having the strong network ties with their co-ethnic classmates through their participation in shared social and cultural activities.

12.3.3 Power asymmetries in group discussion

Cooperative learning is perceived to be a means of promoting learner autonomy by shifting power and responsibility from the teacher to the students and by enabling them to work independently of the teacher in small group contexts. However, this transfer of classroom authority does not guarantee that all students within the cooperative groups will wield equal discourse power for their participation and learning. This carries the potential risk of rewarding those students within the groups who are inherently outspoken and tacitly hold more power than any other group member. Many Bhutanese who came to the class with a lack of self-confidence in their oral English ability were likely to be left on the margins.

Drona's experience in small-group discussion provides a context for understanding this issue (see chapter 5.6). Peter had intended that organizing his students into small groups and giving them some responsibilities would enhance their capacity for autonomous learning. Given the absence of teacher control and surveillance, Peter assigned one student in each group as a peer group leader to be responsible to facilitate the group discussion. However, this hierarchical categorization of leader versus non-leader status led to the emergence of power asymmetries among the group members and consequently influenced the amount and quality of oral participation of the students.

Drona's powerless non-leader identity within the group, in conjunction with his perceived English language inadequacy, contributed to his reticence in a group discussion. Drona usually remained silent unless explicitly called upon to present his views on the topic being discussed. In contrast, Shaina, while in the role of a group leader, wielded greater

power by portraying herself as the most frequent speaker among the three students in the group. Not only did she control the discussion by using IRE (initiation-response-evaluation) sequences, but she also seized Drona's discourse right by interrupting him when he struggled to participate (see chapter 5.6).

When Drona's discourse right was seized by Shaina, he did not resist because he identified himself as an inferior to Shaina and perceived his role as being reactive to Shaina's solicitation. Drona explained his perception of the role of a group leader: "Shaina is just like another teacher in our group. Her duty is to explain and make us understood". However, Drona's interpretation of the role of the group leader was not something intended by his teacher while implementing this approach. The teacher had rather intended to foster the social skills of students and boost their self-confidence in English. This apparent mismatch between the teacher intention and the student interpretation regarding the role of a group leader hindered in achieving desired learning outcomes (Kumaravadivelu, 1991).

In summary, despite the overall worthiness of cooperative learning over the whole-class discussion, it does not necessarily mean that the operationalization of this approach will always be successful in maximizing student participation. Several Bhutanese students who were unaccustomed to this type of instructional practice faced challenges in their active oral participation due to the influences of factors related to culture, language, ethnicity and power. The gap between teacher's intention and students' interpretation with respect to the purpose and procedure of cooperative learning also seemed to have a negative impact on its successful implementation.

12.4 Students' Perceptions on Teacher's Scaffolding

In this section, I will explore how the students' confronting cultural norms and their perceptions of the quality of teacher's scaffolding behaviour impede the development of their autonomous learning. Drawing on the analysis and synthesis of data from both of the AMEP

classes, I will stress the need for the teacher to seek a balance between the provision of autonomy support and students' perceptions of the quality of teacher's scaffolding behaviour. I will start my discussion by explaining how the autonomy support was actualized in the intermediate English class.

12.4.1 Mismatch in perceptions: The intermediate English class

Peter and his Bhutanese students held contradictory perceptions regarding the nature and quality of the teacher's scaffolding behaviour. The mismatches in their perceptions had a negative impact on the students' participation and their autonomy practices.

Peter extended a higher degree of responsibility to his students in their learning (see chapter 5.5 for details). Peter described his perceptions of teaching his adult students:

> When I was teaching high school, I used to speak with a very loud voice – you should go, be quiet, I've told you many times to stop talking in the class. Now, my tone or voice is very calm, polite … I say… you have to be independent and autonomous.

Peter's understanding of teaching adults and the way he implemented it seemed to be largely consistent with the andragogical assumptions of adult learning introduced by Knowles (1990). Knowles suggests that adult learners are responsible beings and capable of self-direction of their own learning. Criticisms, however, have been made against andragogy and self-directed quality of adult learners (Day & Baskett, 1982). Knowles himself concedes that "the assumption that all adults have full capacity for self-teaching and personal autonomy in every learning situation is generally not accepted" (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998, p. 172). In L2 education literature, different levels of autonomy and different ways of representing it have been discussed (see Benson, 2007).

Peter saw himself as a facilitator to student learning and acted, to a large extent, in a similar fashion to make the classroom environment conducive to high level of self-directedness on the part of students. Peter explained his views regarding the provision of autonomy support:

> I want them to develop learn to learn strategies and take charge of their own learning . . . they can go out into the community and they can basically be reasonably independent with those core skills … and it's again something I say them a lot is you've got to go and find the opportunities (see chapter 5.5 for details).

The autonomy that Peter envisioned for his students seemed to be closely related to the three-stage model of autonomy proposed by Littlewood (1996). They include: autonomy as a communicator, as a learner and as a person. The three stages respectively refer to the ability to use language creatively to communicate personal meanings in specific situations, to use appropriate learning strategies for self-regulation of learning and to create personal learning contexts through interacting outside the classroom.

Although both Tanya and Peter incorporated a variety of cooperative learning activities in their instruction, students in Peter's class were allowed substantially greater degree of freedom and flexibility to manage their learning (see chapters 5 and 6). Organizing students into small discussion groups, he allowed them to practise their oral English independently of the teacher (see the above section). The teacher's control and surveillance were relatively minimal, with no negative consequences for non-participation of students. Nonetheless, freedom in learning does not necessarily imply autonomy (Benson, 2007), and this freedom is always constrained due to the need for dependence on the support of others (Little, 1996).

Peter's style of teaching did not, however, appear to be consistent with the perceptions of good teaching held by Bhutanese students. Most interviewed students from both the beginners' and the intermediate class showed a strong preference for teacher-scaffolded learning over self-directed learning. They described a good teacher as one having strong control over student learning and a good student as one showing compliance to teacher's commands (see chapters 4.6 and 5.5). Although the students expressed a preference for small-group discussion over teacher-fronted whole-class discussion, their expectation of a teacher was to keep the group discussion under strict control so that they would concentrate

more on their learning tasks. According to these students, strictness was a necessary condition for obtaining desired learning outcomes. There was also a large discrepancy between the teacher and students with respect to the perceptions of teacher-student relationships. Most students regarded their teacher as the authority, and therefore they were reticent to ask questions (see chapter 5.5).

In considering learning from the learner's point-of-view, Evans and Kozhevnikova (2011) claim that it is not the learning environment per se that is pivotal to learning, but how the students perceive this learning environment. Den Brok, Bergen, Stahl and Brekelmans (2004) add to this argument by stating that:

> Whether students will engage in and successfully complete the activities as teachers expect may partially depend on the students' perceptions of the quality of their teachers' control behaviours. If constructivist ideas (such as, students construct their own knowledge and perceptions of every learning situation) are taken seriously, then far more attention must be paid to students' perceptions of their teachers' behaviours within the context of classroom activities and expectations.

In line with den Brok et al. (2004), the findings from this study show that the mismatch in perceptions between the teacher and students regarding the quality of teacher's scaffolding behaviour had negative influences on student engagement in desired learning activities. Students' perception of their teacher as lacking sufficient authority led to their frustration and minimal verbal participation. Drona explained:

> In the refugee camps, the teachers were very strict. When we did not obey the teachers, they would give punishment to us. So we are used to working hard only when the teachers are strict. There is too much freedom in Peter's class. We can either study or not study. He does nothing. He does nothing even if we do not participate in classroom discussion. This makes us lazy and slows down our progress (see chapter 5.5 for more anecdotes).

A good example of the effects of mismatched perceptions came from students' tendency to overuse their L1 in small group situations. Although Peter was aware that the tendency of students to overly use L1 impeded their oral English practice, he did not tend to publicly reproach them for this. Peter perhaps wanted his students to take responsibility for

deciding whether or not, and the extent to which, they should seek bilingual support from their peers (see chapter 5.5). Similarly, students were aware that their English communicative competence would be improved by practicing to speak to each other in English rather than in Nepali, yet they were often reluctant to do so due to confronting cultural norms and fear of being ostracized by their peers. Therefore, the majority of students ascribed a major degree of responsibility to the teacher who failed to enforce a strict rule for the prohibition of overuse of L1 during the English lesson.

This does not, however, mean that the students lacked the autonomy in their learning process. Their ability to recognize the ways to improve their own English practice can be, for instance, seen as a form of autonomous learning behaviour. What was then more pivotal was that the students did not seem to be ready yet for the quality of autonomy practice the teacher intended to impart to his students. This was mainly due to barriers created by their cultures and their prevailing perceptions of the quality of teacher's scaffolding behaviour. The education system the students had participated before had inculcated the disposition to act in compliance with teachers' prescriptive demands rather than self-direction of learning (see chapter 5.4). Thus, handing over responsibilities to students without taking account of their perceptions of teaching behaviour seemed to have created unwanted tension with respect to the provision of autonomy support in this class. The teacher perceived his students as "unmotivated", whereas the students perceived their teacher as "too friendly". Smith (2003) sheds light on this contradiction: "If learners in a particular context do not appear to respond well to a particular approach to developing autonomy… it might be the approach which needs to be criticized, not the students or the autonomy itself". In the next section, I will discuss the provision of autonomy support in the beginner's English class and how it impacted on student engagement in learning.

12.4.2 The positive impact of teacher's scaffolding behaviour: The beginners' English class

There were considerable differences between Tanya and Peter in their provision of autonomy support. Tanya did not expect her students to take full control of their own learning. However, she did expect them to be aware of their personal learning strategies. Tanya stated:

> At this level, I don't really expect them to be autonomous learners. I do expect them, though, to start being aware of how learning takes place for them, how to be organized for study, whoever is teaching them, you know, what the focus is and their study patterns.

When it came to classroom instruction, Tanya exhibited a relatively higher degree of scaffolding behaviour to manage student participation and learning, especially during peer-to-peer interaction situations (see chapter 4.6). Unlike Peter who allocated greater responsibility to students to manage their turn taking and interaction process, Tanya retained more power to herself to regulate the process of peer interactions. Realizing that the students were reticent to approach and talk to their peers from cross-cultural backgrounds (see section 12.3.2), Tanya established a classroom etiquette, stating that students "must talk to everyone else in the class" (see chapter 4.6). She maintained strict surveillance and pushed students constantly to comply with this established rule. The quality of scaffolding behaviour used by Tanya to engage her students in their tasks may be viewed by some scholars as unsupportive to autonomy (Ryan & Stiller, 1991).

However, Tanya's guiding behaviour yielded positive effects on the oral participation of Bhutanese students. Most students who were initially reticent to approach and talk to non-Bhutanese peers became gradually more confident and assertive (see chapter 4.6). The amount of time they spent with each student increased and the language they used in conversation progressed. After some weeks of guided practice, many students seemed to be ready to converse with their peers without being pushed by their teacher. Littlewood (1999)

considers this kind of readiness itself as a form of autonomy. Rama, who had previously described herself as shy but was observed conversing confidently with both male and female students from different cultural backgrounds. Hem, who had initially reported feeling uncomfortable approaching non-Bhutanese female students, spoke with female students without being pushed by the teacher. These findings are consistent with the notion that the individual's habitus (see section 12.2) can change and adapt to a new situation over time through "only a through-going process of countertraining, involving repeaded exercises" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 172). In this respect, the habitus that the students had embodied (such as shyness and reticence) was found to be gradually transforming through providing the appropriate scaffolding from the teacher. Rama explained:

> I should be active in peer conversation because Tanya strictly told us to talk to everybody else in the class. Although I first felt hesitant to approach and start conversation with Myo and other Afghan males, Tanya strictly monitored whether I spoke to everyone else or not. If she noticed that I have not spoken to all of the students within the given time frame, she would ask me to approach the remaining students. This gave me a kind of pressure to talk to all of the students. I then gradually felt a little more comfortable through repeated practice.

These findings are, however, inconsistent with the argument made by some proponents (Reeve, Bolt, & Cai, 1999; Ryan & Stiller, 1991) of autonomy that a controlling classroom environment has negative effects on student motivation and participation. In contrast to this claim, some degree of teacher's regulation resulted in active oral participation on the part of Bhutanese students. Students were likely to practise their spoken English with those they felt uncomfortable with only when they were pushed to do so by the teacher. This is in line with Swain's (1995) output hypothesis, which suggests a systematic effort on the part of the teacher to push students to produce spoken and written output in their L2 learning process.

This does not, however, mean that autonomy is inappropriate to teaching students from refugee backgrounds. What is equally important is to consider the cultural barriers that

may interfere with their doing so and their perceptions of the quality of teacher's scaffolding behaviour. In the above anecdote, Rama's statement "I should be active … because Tanya strictly told" indicates her perception of some degree of teacher's guiding behaviour in order for her to move out of her comfort zone and combat with cultural shyness and reticence. Despite her awkwardness and discomfort in the initial stages of peer interactions, her confidence increased gradually in the course of time. It was likely that this was mainly because her perception of teacher's scaffolding behaviour converged with the actual teaching behaviour of the teacher.

Some advocates of self-determination theory (such as Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991) may argue that students' oral participation in this class was the outcome of amotivated action, which was compelled by external regulation rather than endorsed by one's sense of self. Although this argument has resonance with emerging learning theories, students' perceptions of teacher's scaffolding behaviour need to be given due attention to achieve desired learning outcomes. Findings from this study indicate that students are likely to act in accordance with teacher's intended curricular goals when their perceptions of the quality of teacher's scaffolding behaviour are compatible with the actual teaching behaviour that surrounds them.

The findings presented in this study suggest a need for the implementation of what Littlewood (1999) calls a "negotiated version of autonomy". This term places emphasis on striking a balance between the provision of autonomy support and students' perceptions of the quality of teacher's scaffolding behaviour. This kind of cultural appropriateness of autonomy has been widely advocated in the L2 literature, especially for teaching students from non-Western backgrounds (Ho & Crookall, 1995; Palfreyman & Smith, 2003).

Furthermore, autonomy in L2 education needs to be viewed not merely as an approach to training learners in learning strategies use, but also as a means for developing

their self-confidence in communicating in the target language. Developing confidence in their abilities to communicate effectively can be considered as a way of promoting their communicative autonomy. Despite their high level of motivation for communication and learning, learners may be reticent to participate in classroom discussion due to confronting cultural norms. As such, there may require some degree of scaffolding from the teacher in the initial stage of teaching learning process. Although autonomy as a learner is also a desirable goal in L2 education both for classroom learning and learning in real-life situations, exposure to self-directed learning strategies need to be handled in a systematic manner by taking account of the barriers that may hinder its development.

In this section, I have discussed the effects of students' perceptions of the quality of teacher's scaffolding behaviour on their autonomy and engagement in learning. In the next section, I will explore the gap between the English language learning needs of the Bhutanese students and their actual learning experience in the AMEP class.

12.5 Grammar or Communication? From Learners' Perspective

The data from the interviews indicate that there was a considerable gap between what the majority of students in the beginners' English class wanted to learn from the AMEP course and what they actually experienced in the class. Although all respondents agreed that they had improved their English through their participation in the programme, they believed that a strong focus on grammar and writing instruction did not help them to develop their communicative autonomy for interaction with the native English speakers in real-life situations. In this section, I will discuss the mismatch in perceptions between the teacher and students with respect to what should be a major focus of the AMEP program.

There seemed to be a general consensus between the AMEP teachers involved in this study and the curriculum designers that the grammar instruction was a necessary adjunct in helping students to improve their use of formal English. The AMEP curriculum, which is

constructed in the form of nationally-accredited Certificates of Spoken and Written English (CSWE), echoes the significance of learning grammar:

> In order to use language effectively in social contexts it is necessary to understand how choices from the systems of grammar relate to the social contexts of language use. It is important that learners develop an understanding of the underlying systems of grammar as part of their formal language learning. It is expected that the teaching of grammar will be integrated into the exploration of texts and contexts rather than taught as a discrete component of a language course (NSW AMES, 2013, p. 23).

The CSWE's advice for the teacher is in line with the contemporary theoretical efforts that have attempted to find a middle way between grammar-based and communication-based approaches to L2 teaching (e.g. Larsen-Freeman, 2000). This alternative approach to teaching L2 is claimed to be effective in promoting both fluency and accuracy of learners in spoken and written performance. Advocating the significance of integrated instructional model that includes teaching of grammar, writing, reading and speaking skills holistically, Hinkel (2006) contends that "without explicit and form-focused instruction, extensive exposure to meaning-based input does not lead to the development of syntactic and lexical accuracy in an L2" (p. 111).

Nonetheless, the Bhutanese interviewees in the beginners' English class indicated that this multi-skill instruction did not adequately address their pragmatic needs and interests of learning English. In both beginner's and intermediate English classes, teaching of grammar often took place in conjunction with teaching of vocabulary, reading, writing and speaking skills. However, in comparison to Peter, Tanya placed the strong emphasis on incorporating grammatical and syntactic features into her daily lessons by means of inductive presentation of grammatical rules, follow-up practices, drills and explicit error correction (see chapter 4.4). This contextualized grammar teaching was intended to help the students to improve their linguistic accuracy in spoken and written discourse. Nonetheless, the students found explicit pedagogy in grammar and syntax to be irrelevant to their communicative needs for real-life social situations. Most students expressed a strong desire for increased instruction in

conversation skills, although this desire was paradoxical in that they seemed reluctant to participate in the conversation activities offered in the class (see the previous sections). Additionally, students' observations conflict with previous research findings that a knowledge of grammar is also necessary for meaningful communication to occur (Hinkel, 2006).

Here, it is worthwhile to recall that students' strong preference for conversation activities in the classroom was closely associated with challenges and contradictions they faced in real communicative situations outside the classroom. The locus of their motivation for learning communicative English seemed to be related to their social integration needs, since their major language-learning goal was to be able to navigate the linguistic markets (Bourdieu, 1991) of everyday social fields such as welfare, health care, government services and labour market. However, students felt that the English they were exposed to in the class did not seem to adequately address their ongoing marginalization in the communicative discourse of everyday social fields. Many students, including those in the intermediate English class, reported a tension between the academic English taught in the class and the idiomatic and colloquial English used by native English speakers outside the class. Hem explained:

> At the street or the supermarket, we don't speak with correct grammar. So it has been very different, what we've been taught and what we are speaking with the white Australians. The teacher has been teaching us grammar a lot. So I feel like: 'why she teaches these grammar rules?' I assume it will be enough if she makes us capable to communicate the basic things with the white people. Even the white people here don't know all the grammar. We don't need to use the grammar in order to speak with the people here. Also, I don't think people will say: 'you've made a grammar mistake when you speak'. The basic grammar can be used in speaking. But I don't think it is necessary to study the grammar in-depth. What we need to learn is how to speak with native English speakers. They speak English using a lot of slang and colloquial expressions. So we should learn these items to communicate with them effectively.

In contrary to students' standpoints, Tanya claimed that she always made use of language materials and texts that would resemble "real-life contexts". This claim indicates

that she was in favour of using authentic language materials in the class. However, the question arises as to what it means to be authentic language materials and who decides whether or not the materials are authentic. Belcher (2006) suggests that "authenticity has long been a vexed term: One person's authenticity may not be another's". In this study, what the teacher perceived as authentic materials did not appear to be authentic for her students. This resulted in a gap between the English the students felt they needed to learn and the English the teacher felt the students needed to learn. This gap was further complicated by students' reluctance to expose their learning needs to the teacher because of the power asymmetries inherent in teacher-student relationships.

Although it might be unrealistic to assume that all such 'casual' language items could be incorporated as part of a 510-hour English program, my position is that immediate integration-related language needs of the refugee students should be given adequate attention in the curriculum. For effective communication with the native English speakers in authentic sociocultural contexts, it is not enough for the L2 learners to have linguistic accuracy, but not the casual English, slang and idiomatic expressions (Colic-Peisker, 2002; Norton, 2013). A good example from this study is that of Hari, who initially felt marginalized in his workplace due to his lack of command of colloquial and idiomatic English that was spoken by English speakers for social purposes (see chapter 8.6). From the social investment perspective (Norton Pierce, 1995), when learners believe that the language program they undertake does not satisfy their immediate language needs, they are less likely to make investment of their time and efforts in language-learning process. For instance, Hem asserted that he would prefer to be at a job rather than in the class because he believed that he could learn English faster in the workplace than in the classroom. Likewise, Khem, the Bhutanese community leader, contends that "if it were not compulsory to attend the AMEP class to be eligible for

the Australian welfare benefits, almost ninety percent of the current Bhutanese students will drop out of the school".

What might be the most appropriate language input to include as pedagogical content can be identified by tapping into students' real-life experiences outside the classroom and their challenges and confrontations in everyday life. The current provision of AMEP allows the teachers to cater for learning needs of students, in conjunction with learning expectations provided by the curriculum (Burns & de Silva, 2007). Additionally, the contemporary researchers in English for Specific Purposes suggest that because language needs are unique to specific learners in specific situations, they should be "carefully delineated and addressed with tailed-to-fit instruction" (Belcher, 2006, p. 135). However, most refugee students in this study showed a great reluctance to disclose their subjective needs to the teacher because they believed that doing so meant that they challenged the teacher's competence and authority. Maya stated, "It is rude in our culture to challenge the teacher or, for example, suggest her that you should teach the conversation skills, not the grammar and writing". Therefore, in order to understand the language needs of students, it seems advisable for the teachers to engage with students in a more pedagogical fashion through classroom activities such as "filling in some parts of the jigsaws by themselves" (see Cooke, 2006). Furthermore, ethnographic exploration that focuses on emic perspectives may offer the valuable insights into the sociocultural lives and the language needs of a particular ethnic group.

12.6 Chapter Summary

Although interaction is a necessary condition for successful acquisition of communicative competence in English, it was a challenge for many students to participate actively in the classroom interaction. The proximate causes of student reticence were shyness, lack of self-confidence, fear of making mistakes and lack of motivation; but its underlying causes were rooted in factors related to cultural, social, linguistic and pedagogical conflicts.

It was difficult to determine what factors might have contributed most to student reticence because all those factors were strongly inter-correlated. For instance, Drona's silence in the small-group discussion was not solely attributable to the unequal power relations (Norton Pierce, 1995) between him and his group leader, but also to his perceived English language inadequacy and his habitus formed within the context of a protracted refugee situation. Some of the constraints for students' oral participation were unique to the refugee experience, derived from their particular socio-historical background; while others were common to the migrants who were studying English as an additional language.

Oral participation in the whole-class discussion was particularly difficult for most of the students in this study, mainly due to their lack of previous experience of speaking in a public context and thereby their common fear of being humiliated in front of the whole class. Although many students showed a preference for small-group discussion where they could practise their English in a lower-risk taking environment, they faced cultural and structural constraints that inhibited them from participating in such settings.

There is no universal prescription of what constitutes good teaching (Kember, Jenkins, & Ng, 2003) and what type of strategies the effective teacher ought to use. The teaching strategies identified as successful by researchers (McGroarty, 1989; Ryan & Stiller, 1991) did not appear to be effective to Bhutanese students. It is evident from this study that both teachers and students, as experienced adults, bring with them their own perceptions of what and how language should be taught in the AMEP classroom. Students were less likely to invest their time and efforts in learning English when their perceptions and expectations of quality of teaching did not match with the actual teaching situations surrounding them. It thus requires the need for the teacher to narrow the gap between teacher's and students' perceptions in order for intended learning outcomes to be achieved.

Moreover, it may be a misleading simplification to assume that all adult students, irrespective of their cultural backgrounds, come to the classroom with sophisticated pedagogical knowledge and skills for autonomous learning. Although autonomy can be a desirable goal for students of all backgrounds, exposure to autonomous learning practices should be handled in a systematic manner. It is not unusual that students are in a fully autonomous position towards the end of the course (Nunan, 2013) with a series of negotiated efforts of the teacher and students beforehand.

Chapter 13

What is Integration?

In this chapter, I will examine the integration of Bhutanese refugees, with a particular focus on the subjective experience of integration at the individual and community level. In contrast to adhering to a prescribed theoretical framework of how refugees should be integrated (Ager & Strang, 2008), I will rather examine in this chapter how the concept of integration was embedded in everyday practice of the Bhutanese refugees involved in this study. In approaching it from this bottom-up perspective, I will conceive integration as a complex process rather than an identifiable outcome and uncover some of the tensions and contradictions arising in this process.

I have divided this chapter into six sections. In section 13.1, I will introduce the key terms used throughout this chapter. In section 13.2, I will discuss the fluidity of community and culture of the Bhutanese refugees, specifically looking at how integration was approached by different groups of Bhutanese in different contexts. In section 13.3, I will explore how emerging transnational practice among refugees influence the ways that they integrate in local contexts. In section 13.4, I will examine the subjective aspects of Bhutanese integration by exploring their perceptions of national identity and belonging. In section 13.5, I will suggest integration as a two-way process between refugees and the host society and discuss the ways the relationship between the two groups can be created. In section 13.6, I will draw insights from (and summarize) the points discussed in the chapter.

13.1 Introducing the Key Terms

For the purpose of this study, it is important to distinguish between the terms retention, assimilation, acculturation and integration. The term retention involves maintenance of ethnic attachments, cultural practices and identifications with the country of origin, while the term acculturation is used to describe the process of "adoption of the culture

(i.e. behaviour patterns, values, rules, symbols etc.) of the host society" (Gans, 1997, p. 877). On the contrary, the term assimilation implies relinquishing one's culture, identity and community of origin for the sake of complete absorption into the host society. By distinguishing acculturation from assimilation, Gans (1997) writes "it is clear that even when second and third generation ethnics may have become … acculturated, they still retain a significant number of ethnic social ties, particularly familial ones, and cannot be said to have assimilated" (p. 876).

In this study, I use the term integration as a middle ground phenomenon which combines both acculturation and retention. This notion implies a situation of cultural mixedness, allowing immigrants to maintain multiple identities. It pays due attention to the benefits of structural incorporation into the host society without the necessity to be virtually indistinguishable from the mainstream culture. This notion of integration is inextricably tied to the conception of multiculturalism as embodied in policy in Australia (McPherson, 2010).

In recent decades, however, there has been a growing suspicion that the retention of cultural diversity is incompatible with national integration. The inverse relationship between retention and integration has been a subject of intense political and public debate across western nations. More specifically, there is an increasing fear that too much bonding of immigrants within their own ethnic or religious cultures and communities may diminish the strength of social cohesion and national unity. Multiculturalism has been criticized in political circles for its contribution to ethnic tensions and societal fragmentation – a situation commonly described as multicultural backlash (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010). In situating this study within the context of contemporary dynamics of Australian multiculturalism, I will attempt to unfold some of the fluidity and dynamism embedded in everyday multiculturalism, integration and ethnic community.

In an attempt to understand the fluidity of ethnic community, I will also employ Putnam's (2000) conceptualization of the distinction between bonding and bridging social capital. Putnam (2007) suggests that bonding social capital results from strong ties "to people who are like you in some important way", while bridging social capital comes from weak ties "to people who are unlike you in some important way" (p. 143). In this study, bonding capital is based on social networks within the Bhutanese community, and bridging capital is based on social networks between Bhutanese and Australian communities.

13.2 The Fluidity of Ethnic Community and Culture

The official discourse surrounding multiculturalism in Australia rests on the belief in the coexistence of different ethnic communities as discrete entities of a national mosaic (Stratton & Ang, 1994). The meaning of community as embedded in policy is constructed based on the "criteria of naive visibility at the level of human collective, the members of which looked alike or came from the same place" (Alleyne, 2002, p. 621). In this respect, the Bhutanese immigrants in Northern Tasmania can be positioned in a simplistic manner as a single monolithic community, making it distinguishable from the majority white community and from other minority ethnic communities of different origins. However, such demarcation of boundary based on ethnicity overlooks the socio-cultural heterogeneity within the community.

Recent approaches to identity and cultural complexities recognize community as a fluid, context-contingent and multidimensional phenomenon (Alleyne, 2002; Kelly, 2003; Lewis, 2010). In proposing a symbolic approach to community, Cohen (1985) suggests that the reality of community lies in the subjective "perception of its boundaries, boundaries which are themselves largely constituted by people in interaction" (p. 13).

The closer analysis of observation and interview data reveals that there was diversity and factionalism within the Bhutanese community based upon the boundaries of caste,

religion and culture. The prevailing caste-based stratification allowed for the symbolic construction of boundaries between the upper-caste and lower-caste Bhutanese, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, Biswa and Rai and so on. Cohen (1986) notes that "caste as an endogamous unit is characterized by ideological boundaries of common descent, thus marking off castes from each other" (p. 105). Such caste titles often intersect with religion and culture and thus leading to the categorization of individuals as cultural insiders or outsiders or members of Hindu or Buddhist community. The majority of Bhutanese whose castes were aligned as Brahmins identified themselves as Hindus, whereas those with non-Brahmin caste category described their religions as Christian or Kirat (an indigenous Nepali religion).

There were three registered Bhutanese community associations in the study site alone, each representing different religious groups. The Bhutanese Community of Tasmania North Inc. was a formal association of Hindu Bhutanese with over 100 members who were mostly Brahmins by caste. Another association in the same locality was Bhutanese Kirat-Buddhist Association of Tasmania that was made up of those with non-Brahmin caste identity. The Bhutanese whose caste was socially read as Biswa (the so-called lowest caste in the traditional caste hierarchy) were associated with Christian community. This diversity based on caste and religion reflects a situation of "communities within communities" (Baumann, 1996) and the fluidity and dynamism of cultural identities.

13.2.1 Hindu Bhutanese community

About 40 Hindu Bhutanese from all over Northern Tasmania would regularly meet at members' homes on rotation basis for two to three hours of Kirtan, a religious preaching involving call-and-response chanting. In one event which was described as the annual celebration of the birthday of one of the Hindu Gods – Krishna, most of the Hindu devotees were dressed in traditional religious attire (such as dhoti, saris, salwar and kameez) that easily

distinguished them from Christian and Buddhist Bhutanese. The pattern of worship in which Sanskrit hymns were chanted in chorus and traditional instruments such as the Nepali-style drum and harmonium were performed was inextricably influenced by traditional Hindu beliefs, values and practices.

For the Hindu Bhutanese, this kind of religious ritual was a prominent space where cultural identity was visually constructed and community boundary was affirmed. In tandem with this, Cohen (1985, p. 50) notes that ritual is an important mechanism "through which people experience community" and their "sense of social location" is constituted. Valtonen (2004) argues that the retention of heritage culture through boundary-marking rituals (Cohen, 1985) is a need-based activity that is neither assimilationist nor separationist (ethnic ghetto). This can be rather an attempt for a search of a frame of reference through which a sense of integration can be developed in a new social environment. It is thus a "solution-focussed activity" (Valtonen, 2004, p. 91) in the society of settlement.

Culture-based religion and rituals were of paramount importance especially to older Hindu Bhutanese, who attributed the root of their refugee exodus (as minority Hindus) to their resistance to forced-assimilation policy adopted by the Government of Bhutan in early 1990s. The awareness that cultural retention provides a main locus of identity underpins the ideological foundation of Australian multiculturalism. Khem commented, "The good thing about Australia is that we can preserve and practise our culture. We can eat our own food, wear our own costumes and celebrate our own festivals".

For these Bhutanese, a successful integration involves becoming a part of the multicultural fabric of the Australian society while still preserving their distinct cultural identity. Khem highlighted the importance of some sort of balance between ethnic and Australian cultures in order for integration to pursue:

> For me, integration means we should participate in the society in various ways, through sports, culture and some sort of other activities. I believe that our confidence

> to go out and engage in the Australian society is very important. But this does not mean that we should relinquish our Hindu rituals, our cultural practices and our traditions. They are equally important for our life.

However, the official recognition of multiculturalism in policy is one thing, its conformity with everyday practices is another matter. Given the high degree of cultural distance from the de facto mainstream culture, the performance of rituals in their traditional forms was a matter of practical difficulty for the Hindu Bhutanese in regional Australia. Freedom to participate in religiously oriented activities did not necessarily imply that they had ready access to sacred space such as temples, where performing rituals in communal gatherings was believed to be efficacious. Harka, who believed that the significance of ritual performance (such as birth, wedding, cremation, pitru paksha) resides in the intercession of Hindu priests, found it costly and sometimes impossible to bring the priests from the mainland states due to their acute shortage in Tasmania. Harka also found that cultural visibility through ritual celebrations, such as wearing a red mark on the forehead during Hindu festivals, arose suspicion and unnecessary attention among the majority of the mainstream society. He commented, "Our festivals such as Dashain and Tihar are confined to our home. When we go outside, we remove tika (red mark on the forehead). Otherwise, several people keep asking us – what is this?"

Bhabha (1990, p. 208) notes that the discourse of multiculturalism constitutes two simultaneous modes of politics – "a creation of cultural diversity and a containment of cultural difference". This interventionist model of approaching multiculturalism encourages cultural diversity, but at the same time undermines the dynamic process of the expression of diversity within each culture. This ambivalence in the idea of multiculturalism can lead to the devaluation and marginalization of the minority cultures and contribute to the othering of those who cannot fit into the mainstream of the national culture. Ang (1996) calls this the "contradictory process of inclusion by virtue of othering" (p. 37). From the refugees' point of

view, tensions are created when they struggle and fail to construct the sense of home in a new environment through the medium of cultural identity. Harka commented, “Neither I know the culture of Australia, nor does the Government recognize my culture”.

13.2.2 Christian Bhutanese community

As has been mentioned above, the caste-based stratification among the resettled Bhutanese contributed to the emergence of new pattern of imagined social boundaries and new kinds of social bonds and community. The relations between the Hindu Brahmins and Christian non-Brahmins was highly complex, often marked by jealousy, friendship, ambivalence, rivalry and antagonism. For example, Raju drew a clear distinction between his strong, trusted relationship with Bhutanese who were from the same social caste background as his own and his sometimes antagonistic relationship with Brahmin Bhutanese.

A strong sense of community among the members of the so-called lower caste non-Brahmins was further strengthened by the perpetual experience of social and religious ostracism from the Hindu Brahmin Bhutanese. According to Raju, this ostracism based on caste boundary led the lower caste Biswa families to convert to Christianity from their native Hindu religion and develop a new pattern of social relations with the society of settlement. Raju explained:

> In Nepal, I was a Hindu. After coming to Australia, we need a Hindu priest to perform the marriage, birth and funeral rituals. However, the Hindu Brahmin priests were reluctant to perform the rituals at our home. They discriminated us because we belonged to the lowest caste. So we felt that we should be united and form our own community. My relatives and other Biswas changed their religion to Christianity. They also insisted me. Then, we started going to the Brighton church. But this is good because we are able to establish the networks with the Australian people.

The stigmatization and religious exclusion from the dominant Hindu Bhutanese community pushed Raju and other marginalized Biswa families towards the formation of an alternative source of social capital beyond the ethnic boundary. In this respect, community, for refugees, is a dynamic and unprecedented process of transformation and adaptation. Its

boundary can be created and recreated by people in interaction, either in a consensual or a contentious manner (Cohen, 1985; Lewis, 2010). The desire for a new community, as in the case of marginalized Bhutanese, stems from the needs of seeking safety in an insecure world (Bauman, 2001).

13.2.2.1 Social bonds

For Raju, the resources embedded in networks of marginalized castelike groups was more efficacious than the ethnically-derived social capital. The social networks based on a sense of bonded solidarity functioned as an important source of "information about Australian life and culture, emotional support, advice … and English language support". Perhaps more important, they served as a social bridge to connect him to the Australian culture and community through the medium of church. This can be argued as the integrative function of bonding social capital, as the social bonds established through networks of castelike minorities facilitated the process of bridging social capital. The formulation of social bonds is not, then, necessarily an impediment to integration with the wider, culturally dominant community. Raju explained:

> I learn about Australian culture mainly from the other Biswa families who are more familiar with the Australian culture. They teach me what we can do and cannot do in Australia. We often organize community meetings and we discuss about how we can make the good relations with Australian people … Sometimes, we invite our Australian friends in our meetings. Sometimes, we invite them at our home for the dinner.

These findings support Bourdieu's (1986, 1991) theoretical concept of social capital, who views it as a product of social and ethnic inequalities of power. In focusing on the relationship between social capital and social inequalities, Bourdieu suggests that individuals are positioned in the hierarchy of power and prestige according to the volume of social, cultural and economic capitals they hold. Other studies have highlighted internal conflicts, distrustfulness, othering practices and hierarchies related to refugee and immigrant populations (Anthias, 2007; Cederberg, 2012; Ryan, Sales, Tilki, & Siara, 2008).

However, these findings are in sharp contrast with findings reported previously of many other non-Christian Bhutanese (see chapter 10.2.3). Other Bhutanese (such as Harka and Puja), who saw ethnic bonds as incompatible with non-ethnic bridges, explained their reluctance to engage in bridging activities due to the availability of the high level of bonding social capital within their own ethnic-specific networks. In recognizing this contradiction, Ryan et al. (2008) conclude in their study of Polish immigrants in London that "the link between bonding and bridging is varied and complex" (p. 686). In this respect, it can be argued that the relationship between social bonds and social bridges is multidimensional and context-specific. Given the fluidity and dynamism of community boundaries, the social bonds considered harmful in one context or for one community can be an advantage in another context or for another community.

13.2.2.2 A hybrid Christmas dinner

As the concept of community and social bonds was more complex and dynamic, so was the process of cultural adaptation and integration. Rituals and cultural events pertaining to refugees' origin country cannot be categorised simply as assimilationist or retentionist practices. Parties, celebrations and other community events can be seen as a space of cultural ambiguity, which allows "integration and adaptation to be negotiated through contestation of here and there" (Lewis, 2010, p. 1). For the Christian Bhutanese, such events allowed the moments to bring the elements of heritage and host cultural practices together to construct a hybrid form of identity (Bhabha, 1990). However, for other Hindu Bhutanese such as Harka, strong embeddedness in such cultural practices contribute to a situation of ethnic enclave (see chapters 7.3 and 7.4).

As such, the celebration of cultural and community events was not simply the perpetual replication of practices brought from the country of origin, but the hybridization of practices drawn from multiple cultural repertoires (Bhutanese, Nepalese, Christian and

Australian). Let me illustrate this point through an example from the fieldwork undertaken in the Brighton church.

During the Christmas season, a Bhutanese-style dinner party was hosted in the dining hall of the Brighton church, where both Bhutanese and non-Bhutanese congregants were invited. By about 7 pm on Saturday in sunny December, the room was crowded with some 30 attendees, many of whom were Anglo-Australians wearing Western clothing with shirts, jeans, skirts, T-shirts, pants. The big room was extensively decorated with Christmas items: a large artificial Christmas tree in one corner, ornaments hanging from the branches of the tree, flickering lights all around it and music playing in the background. After all the guests had arrived, pastor Birkha, an organizer of the event, opened the dinner evening with a short welcome speech in English. Then, the traditional Nepali meal of rice, curry, lentils and pickle (commonly known as dal-bhat-tarkari) including Ema Datshi (Bhutanese cuisine) was served on a set of platters and dishes, with everyone seated on mats around the low wooden tables. The food was prepared by a group of Bhutanese volunteers at their homes. Birkha described this as "the traditional way of eating in Nepal and Bhutan". As the guests were enjoying a "wonderful" buffet dinner, two young Bhutanese women and one man, who were wearing Kera and Gho, respectively, in a traditional Bhutanese fashion took to the stage in a spectacular style. The performers danced to the music of Lok Geet, a folk song which reflect the Nepali traditions in distinctly Nepali tone. As the night progressed, both Bhutanese and non-Bhutanese performers came up to the stage and danced together to English and Nepali songs, including Christmas ones.

The multicultural dinner party illustrates the dialectical interplay between cultural retention and acculturation. It demonstrates that, in a diasporic context, what constitutes cultural traditions (including music, food, language, fashions) is in a continual state of negotiation and transformation when people from the minority culture come into contact with

people from the host culture. As Lu and Fine suggest (1995), ethnic food as a marker of cultural tradition "must be situated so as to seem simultaneously exotic and familiar: distinguishable from mainstream cuisine and yet able to be assimilated as edible" (p. 536). The Christmas dinner celebration allowed the Bhutanese Christians to display their cultural traditions to the wider community while simultaneously reinterpreting their food, musical and dance traditions through the rituals of Christian and Australian cultures. This can be interpreted as a complex contestation between pre-existing and emerging cultural practices, whereby refugees can negotiate their integration into their host society.

13.3 Transnational Community

In this section, I will discuss the relationship between transnationalism and integration, or how transnational connections influence the ways that refugees integrate in local contexts. The involuntary emigration of about 80,000 Bhutanese from Bhutan, and later from Nepal, contributed to the wider dispersion of the population across the world. Most resettled Bhutanese had subunits of families (such as parents, children, grandparents, siblings, uncles, aunts) scattered to many different countries including the USA, Canada, Norway, Denmark, New Zealand, Bhutan, Nepal and India. This spatial dispersion resulted in transnational family situations – that is, where the "family unit is split into a number of subunits situated in more than one national setting" (Haque Khondker, 2008).

Access to advanced technologies such as the internet, iPhone and iPad in the resettled countries enabled the dispersed family members to engage in transnational networking activities. In addition to regular telecommunication with transnational intimates through online audio and video calls, many of those interviewed were involved in economic and cultural transnational activities as well. Examples include sending remittances to those left behind in the refugee camps, making return visits, sending gifts to family and relatives living across countries and attending ritual ceremonies. Such opportunities for transnational

engagement allowed them to rebuild their familial and ethnic connections that had been previously disrupted due to immigration. Maya commented:

> My parents and one of my brothers immigrated to the United States. Another brother and his family have remained in the refugee camp in Nepal. My uncle and two aunts live in Bhutan with my grandfather. My younger sister recently moved to Norway to join her husband's parents. I am in regular contact with them … I make a video call and chat in Facebook, Viber and Skype. I talk to my parents almost every day. I also often chat with my friends through Facebook. I have more than 500 Facebook friends and almost all are Bhutanese.

Here, it is worthwhile to note that the participation in such transnational activities entails "major demands of time, resources and energy . . . the [transnational] community competes with the civic society of the host society for them" (Kivisto, 2001, p. 571). But it was inescapable that a certain level of transnational involvement was of paramount importance for the dispersed family members in order for their emotional and social needs to be addressed. Maya described her profound sense of loneliness and depression resulted from her involuntary separation from her parents without any foreseeable prospect for reunification. In such situation, Maya could not start to think about integration until she reassured herself that her elderly parents in the United States were safe and in good health. Given these complexities, there emerged a tension between the investment of time, resources and efforts for integration into the local community and their emotional and social commitments for the maintenance of transnational ties across borders.

Refugees immigrating to Australia under the Government's Humanitarian Program are seemingly viewed in policy terms as permanent settlers. Efforts are thus made through numerous settlement programs and services such as English-language classes to address their needs for sustainable integration. Nonetheless, emerging transnational practices among resettled refugees in such super-diverse contexts (Vertovec, 2007) adds a complexity in the process of local integration and identity reconstruction. Many resettled families were not socially and culturally bound to one geographical space only.

Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt (1999) argue that transnationalism as a social field is "composed of a growing number of persons who live dual lives: speaking two languages, having homes in two countries, and making a living through continuous regular contact across national borders". The increasing growth in marriages between the migrated Bhutanese and the residents in Nepal was a significant manifestation of transnationalism. This kind of transnational relationship led some Bhutanese to maintain dual lives with a dual sense of belonging. They resided and earned their livelihoods in Australia while maintaining strong and simultaneous links to spouse's family and relatives in Nepal and making recurrent visits to the country. Khem estimated that about 30 resettled Bhutanese including both males and females had made their return visits to Nepal to get married because of the difficulties in finding a spouse locally. For these young Bhutanese, then, integration and transnationalism could be a simultaneous social process. The relationship between these two social processes can be conflictive or consensual depending on the choices made by the individuals themselves (Erdal & Oeppen, 2013; Kivisto, 2001).

The transnational engagement of some older Bhutanese can be seen as a reaction to perceived religious and cultural disintegration in the society of settlement. Itzigsohn and Saucedo (2002) call this kind of transnationalism "reactive transnationalism". The poor sense of integration into life in Australian society (see the next section) led Harka to intensify his transnational engagement in Nepal, which he regarded as his real home in both the cultural and the symbolic sense. One such transnational involvement was the arrangement of marriages of his two children with the local residents of Nepal, which was rooted in his desire to secure a legal path for his permanent repatriation at some future time (see chapter 5.5). In the case of Harka, the interaction between transnationalism and local integration was two-fold: On the one hand, his strong connection to the country and culture of origin inhibited his

motivation to integrate locally. On the other, his poor integration into the local life perpetuated his transnational involvement more influentially.

The subjective motivation of refugees surrounding their migration to Australia seemed to have a strong influence on their post-migration transnational engagement and mode of their local integration. As such, the subjective meaning of integration varied very much depending on what drove them to Australia and what aspirations they had for themselves in the new country. Although the Bhutanese emigration was seen as rooted in issue related to the protracted refugee situation, the personal reasons for emigration varied among those interviewed (see chapter 9). One of the main motives for Hem to come to Australia was economic gain, with a clear intention to return to Nepal at some time in the future. But this intention contrasts with the prevailing assumption that refugees who immigrate to Australia will remain here permanently. In line with this, Kivisto (2001) notes that "political and economic crises in the homeland are stimuli for homeland focused activities, but when those crises abate, immigrants will tend to focus their energies on the place where they find themselves" (p. 751).

Hem's involvement in transnational activities resembles what Itzigsohn and Saucedo (2002) call "linear transnationalism", which results from "ties that link immigrants to their families and places of origin" (p. 771). Shortly before migration, Hem had put down strong personal roots to Nepal through his marriage to a Nepali citizen. His deep sense of attachment to his asylum country was additionally grounded on shared cultural and symbolic affinities. Hem's transnational activities were mainly social and cultural in character. For instance, his motivation to encourage his child to exclusively speak Nepali at home was his desire to retain Nepali identity and make his child able to communicate well with her grandparents back in Nepal.

Hem's transnational connection to what he considered his "real home" shaped the aspects of his integration in Australia. He expressed enthusiastic interest in the acquisition of host-country language and labour-market integration, but he resisted his assimilation into the cultural ethos of Australian mainstream. He commented, "I want to learn English and work hard to earn money, but I do not want to be culturally Australian". Hem's clear preference for this "segmented assimilation" (Portes & Zhou, 1993) was associated closely with the aspirations he had for himself in the new country. He had viewed his migration to Australia as a way to improve economic efficiency rather than a way to rebuild his national identity. As such, for him, transnationalism and integration seemed to have co-existed side by side, but the former influenced the latter in terms of quality and intensity.

Drawing from the discussions above, many Bhutanese involved in this study can be argued as transnational migrants, rather than merely as refugee settlers. However, the degree of their transnational engagement varied very much depending on their own personal circumstances and the complexity surrounding their transnational connections across geographical borders. The reasons for transnational activities varied considerably from one person to another. For some, it was inescapable due to the need for emotional and social connectedness. For others, transnational participation was a strategy to secure a pathway for permanent repatriation to the country where they found their identity in a cultural and symbolic sense. Regardless of the case, transnationalism seemed to have a strong influence in their local integration in varying ways. It seemed to have created tension between their investment of time, resources and effort to learn the language and culture of the host country and their emotional, social and cultural needs for the maintenance of transnational ties across countries. Nonetheless, it can be more realistic to accept that transnationalism is an unavoidable component of refugee immigration in contemporary modern societies. Thus,

transnational aspects of immigration may need to be incorporated into the conceptual and policy framework of refugee integration.

13.4 Integration from the Identity Perspective

In this section, I will examine the subjective aspects of Bhutanese integration by exploring their perceptions of national identity and belonging. When immigrants come to a new country, they undergo a process of identity reconstruction as part of their acculturation into the new environment (Berry 1997; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). Phinney et al. propose a two-dimensional model of identity reconstruction, with one representing identification with one's own ethnic group (ethnic identity) and the other representing identification as a member of one's new society (national identity). The combination of the two yields four identity categories: a) assimilated identity, b) integrated identity, c) separated identity and d) marginalized identity. The assimilated identity refers to strong identification with the national culture and weak identification with one's own ethnic culture. The integrated identity can be said to have emerged when an individual maintains a combination of ethnic and national identities with a dual sense of belonging to cultures of both origin and host countries. In contrast, the term separated identity is used to refer to the individual who retains a highly exclusive ethnic identity. Finally, the marginalized identity is the outcome of exclusion and marginalization from the host society.

Identity reconstruction is a complex and dynamic process that evolves and changes over time depending on contextual circumstances (Phinney, 1996). Many respondents, particularly the younger ones, described their identity reconstruction as a complex, dialectical process. They admitted greater ambivalence regarding their old and emerging identities and found it difficult to choose among multiple identities to define their sense of self. They were Bhutanese by ancestry, Nepalese by cultural roots and Australian by citizenship. All the three identities were in a continual state of transformation and reinterpretation. The priority of one

over the others was subject to change depending on their subjective experience of acculturation, the extent to which they accumulated the cultural and linguistic capitals of the host country and the degree to which they maintained cultural and religious distinctiveness while approaching the host society. Manju constructed a new hybrid identity (Bhabha, 1990) for herself with elements rooted in Bhutanese, Nepalese and Australian cultures. For her, the three identities were in a dialectical tension, as she navigated through the acculturation in the new society. She commented:

> I was born in Bhutan but grown up in Nepal. Sometimes, I get confused whether my culture is of Bhutan origin or Nepal origin. But, in fact, I feel that my culture is a mixture of three countries. In the last few years, I have gradually immersed in the Australian way of life. Now, this makes me feel uncertain about who I am – whether I am Bhutanese, Nepalese or Australian. I think that the more English I learn and the more I act like Australian, the more Australian I become. But, then, the other two cultures will be disappeared.

For the Bhutanese respondents, the formation of an Australian national identity was influenced by a range of factors specific to each individual person (such as age, linguistic ability, social networks, cultural knowledge). Based on their self-identification, it is important to differentiate between those who referred to themselves as Bhutanese-Australian (i.e., an integrated identity) and those who felt they belonged exclusively to Bhutanese identity (i.e., a separated identity). Khem used a hyphenated descriptor, "Bhutanese-Australian", to describe his newly constructed identity. He explained:

> I feel that I am both Bhutanese and Australian because I can speak English well, I have Australian friends and I practice both cultures. But my parents believe that just getting a piece of paper [citizenship] cannot make them Australian. They feel that they don't belong to this country and culture.

For Khem, the claim to hyphenated-Australian implies a duality of selves that reflects his simultaneous association with Bhutaneseness and Australianness in terms of language, culture and life style. His ability to speak English well and his social networks with native-born Australians were the important signifiers of Australian identity. Khem compared his subjective acculturation with that of his parents and labelled them exclusively as "Bhutanese"

without making reference to national or citizenship markers of identity. This separated identity was attributed to the parents due to their general sense of alienation reinforced by the lack of competence in the language and culture of the host country.

Khem's response was reflective of the fact that 1.5 generation Bhutanese (those who came to Australia as a child or an adolescent) were more able than their parents to reconstruct and reinterpret their ethnic identity, as they navigated through the acculturation to fit into the new environment. The identity reconstruction and assimilation among 1.5 or second generation immigrants has been well-documented in other previous studies on immigration (Portes & Zhou, 1993). Liu (2015) argues that second generation immigrants have more favourable conditions for being well-equipped with English language skills and cultural knowledge that are deemed essential for the construction of hyphenated (or integrated) identity.

Despite the theoretical treatment of citizenship and voting rights as crucial elements of subjective integration (Ager & Strang, 2008), the Australian citizenship did not necessarily translate into self-identification as Australian in the case of older Bhutanese. Their strong sense of cultural and religious identity and their difficulties in adapting to the new linguistic and cultural environments were more influential factors that together contributed to their sense of disconnection from the Australian national identity. For further details, see the case description of Harka in chapter 5.5. For Harka, the Australian citizenship did not seem to be a fundamental sign of national belonging and integration. A deep sense of linguistic, religious and cultural alienation was marked by his subjective perception of the host country as a "foreign land" with little relevance to his sense of inner self. He commented, "Materialistic pleasure in the foreign land does not bring the satisfaction to me. Australia is a foreign land". Harka's acculturation experience reinforces the opinion that "integration begins in people's minds" (Bayram, Nyquist, Thorburn, & Bilgel, 2009). As such, it was not the age factor per

se that led to the construction of separated identity and rebellion against national identity, but rather the fact that the older migrants displayed more ethnic behaviour and felt less connected with the host culture (Miller, Birman, Zenk, Wang, Sorokin, & Connor, 2009).

The ability to use the host country language to effectively communicate with the local people had a greater influence than any other variables on the construction and legitimization of national identity. Most Bhutanese, including 1.5 generation, with perceived language barriers felt that they had no right to claim their Australianness despite the length of residence and legal status in Australia. Wodak (2012) identified language as a "legitimate weapon" (p. 217) to draw the boundaries between us and them and manifest one's identity in the social world. The effective acquisition of English was closely linked to the development of Australian side of identity, while the lack of this ability contributed to the feelings of cultural outsiderness and intensification of Bhutaneseness. The following quotations illustrate this theme:

> I am a lawful permanent resident of Australia. Next year, I will get a naturalized Australian citizen. But I do not feel that I will be a real Australian. First, I should be able to speak English fluently, and then I can claim myself as Australian. (Drona)

> I feel that I am still Bhutanese because I do not know English well. Although I now know some English, the local people do not understand my English. I should be able to speak like them to become an Australian. Sometimes, I ask myself – how can I become like them in terms of English ability? (Puja)

> I do not know how to speak the language of this country, nor do I know the culture. So how can I say that I am an Australian? (Maya)

In the above quotations, respondents attributed their weak sense of Australian identity to the insufficient command of English communication skills. A great deal of scholarly attention has been directed to the role of host country language proficiency in the functional integration of immigrants (Chiswick, 1991; Doerschler & Jackson, 2010). However, the fluency in the language skills of the destination country was not merely a predictor of socio-economic adaptation, but also was responsible for the manifestation of a subjective sense of

Australianness. Colic-Peisker (2005) found that immigrants who spoke English with a non-Australian accent felt it difficult to claim their "Australian identity" and were "often conscious of their perceived otherness" (619). In this respect, linguistic adaptation can be looked at as a marker of identity adaptation (i.e., integrated identity), alongside social and economic adaptation.

Despite the fact that the cultural landscape in Australia has long shifted away from assimilation towards multiculturalism, the nation's identity is argued to be inextricably influenced by Eurocentric cultural hegemony (Hage, 2012). For the Bhutanese, the visible difference was as potent as the audible difference in stimulating otherness from a national identity. The racial difference from the white majority was reported as another reason by those respondents who self-identified as Bhutanese only or Bhutanese-Australian. Tek explained:

> For us, even if we acquire sufficient English and learn Australian culture, our identity as Bhutanese will not be removed in this white country because of our skin colour and physical features. When they ask me where I am from, I should say I am from Nepal. So, wherever I go, this identity will not be removed. It is our inherited identity. If I tell them I am Australian, they will say, "You do not look like Australian". Then, I need to say, "I came from Nepal or Bhutan".

Tek admitted that no matter how fluently he spoke English and how well he assimilated into Australian culture, he could not be fully Australian (i.e., an assimilated identity) by virtue of his racial difference. He defined himself as a non-White in a predominantly "white country" and thus constructed an outsider status. In line with this, Colic-Peisker (2005) observed that the European refugees who were visibly similar in terms of their whiteness felt a greater sense of inclusion than those who were visibly different from the Australian society. As such, some respondents, including Tek, relied on hyphenated Bhutanese-Australian to affirm their identity, as it pertained to what they had inherited from the past and what they hoped to be in the future. For them, the hyphenated identity was a neutral strategy that was neither solely Australian nor solely Bhutanese.

In the discussion above, I used the interview data to examine the ways in which Bhutanese respondents understood and made sense of the idea of Australian national identity. The subjective meaning of being Australian seemed to be grounded in and shaped by the lived experience of individuals in the process of their acculturation and adaptation to the Australian society. For them, the development of Australian identity was highly influenced by everyday experiences (such as the ability to speak English, familiarity with mainstream Australian culture and whiteness in racial terms) rather than by the abstract ideals of political discourse (such as citizenship). The subjective meaning they attributed to Australian identity was visceral and self-evident. In recognizing the fluid and hybrid nature of their own identities, most respondents reacted negatively to the prospect of being a non-hyphenated (absolute) Australian. For them, the hyphenated or integrated Australian was a more desirable and viable strategy to pursue.

13.5 Two-Way Integration Process

The success of integration requires mutual compatibility and cooperation between refugee and host communities. In a general sense, integration presupposes refugees to incorporate into the social, cultural, economic and political aspects of the host society. However, the preparedness of refugees to adapt into the new socio-cultural environment is not alone sufficient to induce successful integration. It is largely dependent on the willingness on the part of the host society to embrace newcomers and enable them to access linguistic, cultural and social resources embedded in networks of the host society. The importance of a two-way process of integration has been well-established in the literature (Berry, 2011; Strang & Ager, 2010).

In the case of Bhutanese, the process of integration was highly context-dependent because the degree of acceptance, inclusion and social capital they gained varied very much according to the receiving contexts in which they operated on a daily basis. As such, some

Bhutanese, such as Manju, seemed to be highly integrated into the Australian-Christian community in the Brighton church but poorly integrated into the Australian community in the neighbourhood.

The welcome and support offered by members of the Christian community had a positive influence on Manju's sense of inclusion and integration into that community (see chapter 6.5). This sense of inclusion can be regarded as the affective dimension of integration, which Berry (2011) argues can foster the "positive evaluation of, identification with and acceptance of the values of" the host society (p. 2.15). In addition to this psychological aspect of integration, her strong social networks with Australian Christians provided a form of social capital that enabled her access to various support services and knowledge and information about Australian culture. Such contacts with expert members of the society also fostered cultural capital accumulation (Portes, 1998). In contrast, the negative treatment Manju received from the local people in the neighbourhood contributed to her sense of regret, frustration and social exclusion. Manju described it the following way:

> It depends on their behaviour. The white people in the church treat me with respect and care. This gives me motivation to learn their culture and keep a good relationship with them. But some people in the neighbourhood treat me rudely because of my skin colour. This makes me feel sad. At that time, I feel like I should not have come to Australia.

These findings are consistent with Berry's (2001) argument that the receiving society plays "a powerful role in influencing the way in which acculturation" (p. 620) will take place. Berry suggests that the successful bicultural integration is possible only in the societies that embrace multiculturalism in an explicit manner. In the case of this study, it is important to draw a distinction between multiculturalism in policy and multiculturalism in practice. The reason for this is that despite multicultural ethos enacted in policy discourse, not all members of the Australian society were equally open and inclusive towards immigrants and their ethnic cultures. The following two anecdotes illustrate the fact that some members of the

mainstream Australian society did not seem to be ready yet to embrace cultural pluralism in their neighbourhoods:

> One day, I was walking near a supermarket in Mowbray. Some white teenagers, who were in a car, shouted and threw an empty bottle at me through their car window. (Tek)

> When walking down the street, I was talking to my mum in Nepali because she could not speak English. An old white woman yelled from her house, "When you are in Australia, you have to speak in English!" (Khem)

Bhabha (1990) points out that racism is enacted in a wide variety of forms even in societies that encourage multiculturalism "because the universalism that paradoxically permits diversity masks ethnocentric norms, values and interests" (p. 208). For more details about racism and hostility, see chapter 11.2.

13.5.1 Building trust and reciprocity

Trust is a key element in building inter-ethnic networks of cooperation, and thereby socio-cultural integration. Putnam (1993) places a strong emphasis on the importance of social trust in the formation and development of bridging social capital. The low-level of inter-cultural integration in the neighbourhood context can be illustrated by the low level of mutual trust between Bhutanese and members of the Australian society. This issue was noted by some respondents, who reported the tendency of both groups to turn inward to their own communities for networking and socialization. Tek commented:

> The other challenge is the lack of inter-community relationship. We Bhutanese have our own community and Australians have their own community. But our community has very limited contacts with the Australian community. The main reason may be lack of trust with each other.

Failure to establish reciprocal trust relations resulted in the high levels of ethnic prejudice, hostility, ethnic enclave and social segregation. Thus, it can be of great importance to explore how trust can be created between the newcomers and the local people. Putnam (1993) suggests that the social trust in contemporary modern societies can arise from the norm of reciprocity. Reciprocity entails an individual's investment of resources in the

expectation that they will be repaid in the future (Portes, 1998). However, establishing relations of trust and reciprocity with the local people appeared to be a particular challenge for the Bhutanese. This was because these newcomers were in a powerless and vulnerable position in relation to the established members of the host society due to their lack of legitimate cultural and linguistic capital and their pre-migration experiences.

Additionally, there seemed to be a general lack of willingness on the part of the majority of local people to build the relations of trust with refugees. Khem drew a distinction between the local people he encountered on the street and those serving in the public institutions in terms of the degree of acceptance and trust relations:

> Most service providers such as staff at hospital and Migrant Resource Centre are friendly, respectful and willing to offer up support. They know our backgrounds and they are familiar with our problems. But other Australians we encounter in the street and neighbourhood are very different. Some just say 'hello', but some look at us with suspicion, as if we are illegal migrants.

It was likely that the local people with little experience with refugees were reluctant to place their generalized trust on strangers or those outside one's cultural group. Building a relationship of trust seemed to have become even more difficult in recent years due to the growing fear and suspicion caused by the aggravation of terrorism and ethnic tensions around the world.

This might be a catch-22 situation for refugees with regard to their host-society integration. Quite often, they are blamed for not integrating well into the social, economic and cultural fabric of the Australian society (Dhanji, 2009). But, in fact, this disintegration, or what Berry (2011) refers to as "exclusion", is at least partially imposed on refugees by those who are in the position to support refugees to access cultural and linguistic resources needed to integrate successfully.

There is a general consensus that a high level of bridging social capital results in a high level of inter-cultural integration (Putnam, 2000; Ryan et al. 2008). The manifestation of

the high degree of bridging social capital in the Brighton church seemed to be the outcome of the high level of reciprocal trust between Bhutanese and Australian communities (see chapter 6). Although this sense of trust was initially established through the mechanism of religious homophily, it might have been evolved through the positive cooperation between the two cultural groups and the mutual exchange of resources over an extended period of time. The motivation of the Australian-Christian community to provide resources and support to refugees did not seem to be based solely on the "altruistic dispositions" (Portes, 1998, p. 8) built by the Christian. Although there might not be the same degree of reciprocity expectations, refugees in this context were trusted as valued members who could make a useful contribution to the host society in a reciprocal manner. Paul, the Australian church coordinator, put it this way:

> It is not like – Oh, we have got to do everything for Bhutanese congregation. They are doing a lot for themselves and an example for us. Their social interaction is much stronger than our modern Australian community. They are much more community-oriented than Australians. A few weeks ago, we organized a three days seminar here at the church. Several Bhutanese congregants spontaneously volunteered for the organization of the event … They took all the seats out of the church and they could sit on the floor in Bhutanese style. They had food in the kitchen and everything like that. When it came to Sunday, the chairs were all put back perfectly, the kitchen was as clean as it was. It was all done by the Bhutanese congregation. So this is good for us. We have learned, we are learning from one another.

This anecdote suggests that building social networks with the refugee community, when viewed positively, is not a zero-sum game for members of the host society. A positive attitude towards refugees was found to be an important step to bring about the reciprocal trust in nurturing relationships. Rather than viewing refugees as traumatized individuals and thus a drain on the receiving nation's welfare (Colic-Peisker & Walker, 2003), the recognition of their potential contribution to enriching the cultural fabric of the Australian society may create a win-win situation for both refugees and their host society. Such an attitude can promote integration as a two-way mutual adjustment so as to fit together into the multicultural salad bowl.

13.6 Insights and Conclusion

The Bhutanese refugees in this study were a highly diverse group, reflecting the diversity in cultures, religions, castes, age, identities, transnational ties and so on. The diversity among the Bhutanese population can be framed within the wider context of multicultural, super-diverse (Vertovec, 2007) society of Australia. Vertovec first uses the term super-diversity to describe the complexity surrounding the contemporary situation of diversity in Europe arising from global migration flows. This diversity has resulted from the influx of waves of new immigrants from different origins, religion, language, social class and culture. As in Europe, the multicultural society in modern Australia is far more diverse and complex than when the Whitlam Government first introduced multiculturalism in 1973 (Castles, Hugo & Vasta, 2013). This study highlights a high level of such migration-driven diversity, which can be observed not only among different ethnic groups (such as Bhutanese, Chinese, Burmese and African) but also within the same ethnic group. Today's society encompasses multiple sub-cultures and sub-communities within the single ethnic community. This diversity challenges the traditional ways of looking at immigrants and refugees through the lens of ethnic difference, as not all immigrants from the same origin have the same dimension of integration experience in their host society.

Immigrants in today's society are "composed of those whose networks, activities and patterns of life encompass both their host and home societies" (Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992, p.1). The refuges involved in this study were not an exception to this emerging trend of transnationalism. There were signs that many Bhutanese families were transnational migrants rather than permanent settlers to one geographical space. The transnational practice created complexity and co-conditioned the subjective meaning of integration.

The meaning of integration, as embedded in everyday social practice, is complex, fluid and highly individual. For some Hindu Bhutanese, a successful integration means developing a sense of home in a new place through traditional religious and cultural frames of reference. For the transnational Bhutanese, an integration involves living dual lives by actively engaging in social, cultural and religious practices of their country of origin while simultaneously earning their livelihoods in Australia. Some Christian Bhutanese negotiated their integration into the wider society through the repertoire of cultural traditions and community events. Such diversity in refugee integration experience contrasts with the simplistic notion that ethnic community and heritage culture impedes integration. It also challenges the prevailing assumption that integration is primarily concerned with events, activities and practices attributed to the mainstream society (Lewis, 2010).

From the social capital perspective, the relationship between social bonds and social bridges was complex and multifaceted. This study supports Portes's (1998) argument that bonding social capital "cuts both ways" (p. 18), especially in regard to its mediating role in bridging social capital that is deemed important for mainstream societal integration. As such, the social bonds considered harmful for one community or in one context can be helpful for another community or in another context. Therefore, it does not always imply that immigrants with strong social bonds are less integrated into the host society.

Integration is not merely a process of socio-cultural adaptation, but rather a process of identity reconstruction in which refugees transform their old identity to a new identity of the host nation. This identity reconstruction is largely shaped by a variety of contextual factors, including the level of proficiency in English, the familiarity with the local culture and the degree of emotional attachment to the host nation. The findings show that the older Bhutanese with a weak sense of religious, social, linguistic and cultural attachments to the

host nation found it more difficult to construct their identity that could help them in becoming an integrated Australian.

This study argues for the context-dependent nature of integration. This is primarily because the refugees who are integrated well in one socio-cultural environment are found to be less integrated in another. The readiness of refugees with adequate linguistic and cultural capital does not seem to be sufficient in itself for leading to successful integration unless there is a positive reception from members of the host society. Therefore, a positive attitude towards refugees, such as that they are valued members rather than a drain on the social-welfare system, is found to be an important step to bring about mutual trust and adjustment.

Part D: Conclusion

Chapter 14

Conclusions and Implications

14.1 Conclusions about Bhutanese Refugees

In this ethnographic study, my primary goal was to examine how the process of language learning and integration is situated and shaped by the different social and cultural spaces refugees encounter in their everyday life in Australia. Three different kinds of spaces specific to adult Bhutanese refugees were mainly explored in this study: the ethnic space, the mainstream social space and the pedagogical space. The last four chapters of the analysis, from chapter 10 to chapter 13, were specifically devoted to the analysis of how language learning and integration processes were embedded in, and influenced by, the three different social spaces.

For refugees, the ethnic space is a familiar space where they can access bonding social capital through family and internal community networks and reproduce their religious and cultural identity imported from their country of origin. In chapter 10, I examined the effects of refugees' ethnic space, with specific attention to the ways in which various aspects of language learning and integration outcomes were influenced and shaped in both positive and negative manners by their embeddedness within the cultural and social frames of this space. Additionally, for refugees, the mainstream social space is an unfamiliar space embedded in everyday practices of the English-speaking Australian society across various settings, such as the neighbourhood, church, hospital and shopping store. In chapter 11, I examined the inclusionary and exclusionary nature of the mainstream social space in light of its impact on situated language practice, bridging social capital and wider social integration of refugees. Moreover, in chapter 12, I explored the ways that language teaching and learning of adult refugees were structured in the pedagogical space. Specifically, I investigated the extent to which their culture, pre-migration experiences and their perceptions of teaching

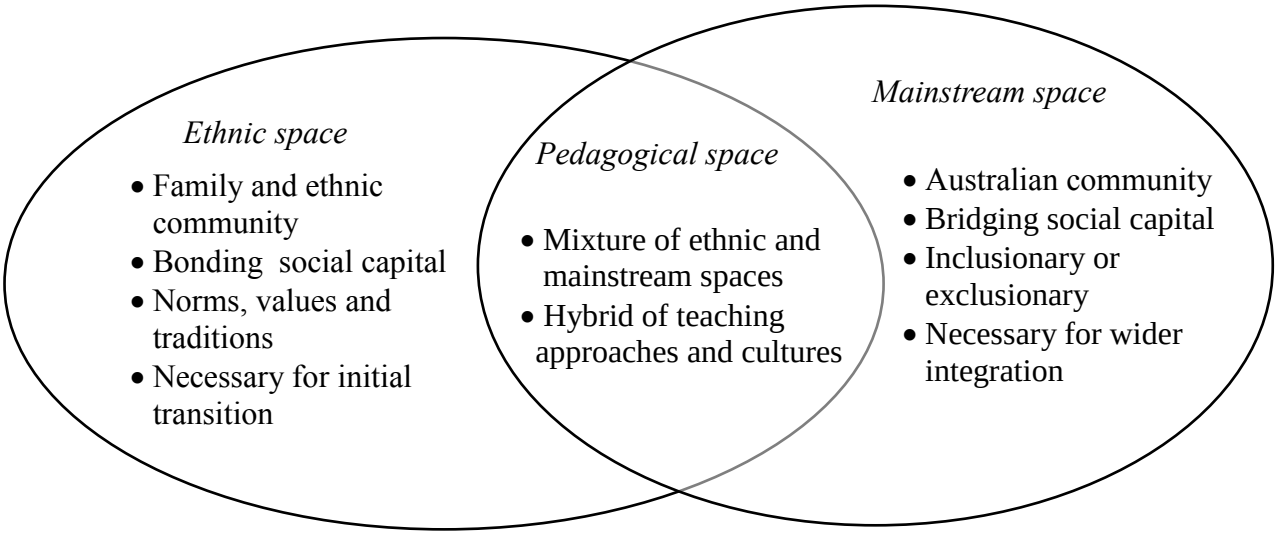
influence the way they approach their learning. The pedagogical space is an overlapping space comprised of, and reflective of, both the ethnic and mainstream social space. Finally, in chapter 13, I explored the subjective meaning of refugee integration and conceived it as a dialectical interplay between refugees' ethnic space and the mainstream social space.

Compared to other refugee studies, this study attempted to provide a holistic and comprehensive understanding of the process of language learning and integration of adult refugees, taking into consideration a wide range of factors influencing this process such as family and ethnic community networks, pre-migration influences, cultural norms and traditions, and host societal and institutional contexts. In this respect, the study was interdisciplinary in its approach. It drew on a wide range of theories from the fields of sociolinguistics, language pedagogy, feminist education, cultural anthropology, sociology and migration studies. Adopting this inter-disciplinary approach, the findings contribute to a broader understanding of the ways in which language learning interacts with integration (such as social, cultural, and identificational) and the ways in which these two processes are connected to, and influenced by, the issues of gender, ethnicity, race, context, culture, social networks, pre-migration experiences and identity.

Now, this final chapter attempts a synthesis of the key findings of the study and discusses their implications, with specific reference to how all three spaces – ethnic, mainstream and pedagogical – are intertwined with each other and with the language learning and integration process of refugees. Figure 2 summarizes the key features of each of the social spaces from the point of view of language learning and integration and shows the interconnected relationships among them. The contributions and implications of the findings related to the ethnic, the mainstream and the pedagogical space are discussed, respectively, in

sections 14.2, 14.3 and 14.4. Finally, in section 14.5, I will draw on the idea of Bhabha's (1990) "Third Space" to suggest what constitutes a successful integration of refugees.

Figure 2. Spaces for Language Learning and Integration



14.1.1 The Ethnic space

In this section, I will draw on the key findings from chapters 10 and 13.2 to evaluate the effectiveness of the ethnic space in language learning and integration and discuss the implications for both research and practice. The four subsections of this section are, respectively, devoted to the following topics: (1) ethnic space for initial transition, (2) integration beyond the ethnic space, (3) language learning within the ethnic space and (4) implications about the ethnic space.

14.1.1.1 Ethnic space for initial transition

In contrast to the refugee integration frameworks proposed by previous studies (Ager & Strang, 2008; Valtonen, 2004), I wish to suggest that a distinction needs to be made between the initial transition phase and the later period of integration, as the parameters and modes embedded in these two phases of settlement have been found to be significantly different. For refugees arriving in a new country, one of the first necessities is to become familiar with the everyday idiosyncratic practices of the host society, ranging from accessing

tangible resources such as food, housing and health care service to navigating the bureaucratic welfare and legal system. In this respect, this study suggests that the resources embedded in informal social networks within the refugees' ethnic space are paramount in the transition phase, during which they can be in jeopardy of being overwhelmed if they fail to draw upon familiar social and cultural resources to make sense of their unfamiliar surrounding environment.

Social scientists have agreed that one inescapable effect of modernization is the dramatic rise of individualization, posing major threats to the vibrancy of social connectedness and social capital (Allik, & Greenfield, 2008; Putnam, 2000; Realo). The advent of modernization, urbanization and social atomization in contemporary Western nations have contributed to the gradual erosion of social bonds within the family and community. Within this context, this study makes an important contribution to the literature of social capital by showing how refugees, who have been enculturated into a traditional collectivistic society, can access and benefit from resources and information embedded in networks of ethnic space during the process of their transition to the new society.

The notion usually attributed to refugees that the involuntary nature of their migration leads to the rupture of social bonds may not fully capture the complex dynamics of refugees' social networks in this globalized world. The findings from this study show that despite the traumas refugees have suffered in leaving their homelands and the devaluation of their cultural capital, the only viable source of capital they can draw on during their transition to the host country is the social capital embedded within the ethnic space, especially in the situation when a high inflow of refugees from the same origin are concentrated in one geographical space. Recent advances in telecommunication and travel have further expanded the opportunities for the rebuilding of transnational social networks with those who have been dispersed due to involuntary migration.

This study highlights the affective and instrumental value of bonding social capital embedded within the refugees' ethnic space. The resources and information drawn from bonding social capital can be immensely important for those who are poorly connected to the host society due to linguistic and cultural obstacles. Social bonds can serve as a coping resource against the adverse effects of culture shock, language shock, racism and past trauma. This study demonstrates that if the pattern of refugee resettlement in the specific destination follows a chain migration process, new cohorts of refugees are likely to be reliant most heavily on earlier cohorts for philanthropic support and information. When it comes to meeting their immediate settlement needs upon arrival or the need for advice and information about new cultural practices, the social capital arising from ethnic bounded solidarity has been found to be more valuable and trust-based than the one derived from local agencies contracted for refugee resettlement. Refugees from collectivistic cultures can revitalize intergenerational relationships within families through the application of a generalized norm of reciprocity. Older parents, who are dependent upon their children for material support and inverse socialization, can reciprocate the benefits gained by providing household labour support such as child care, cooking, dishwashing and gardening.

14.1.1.2 Integration beyond the ethnic space

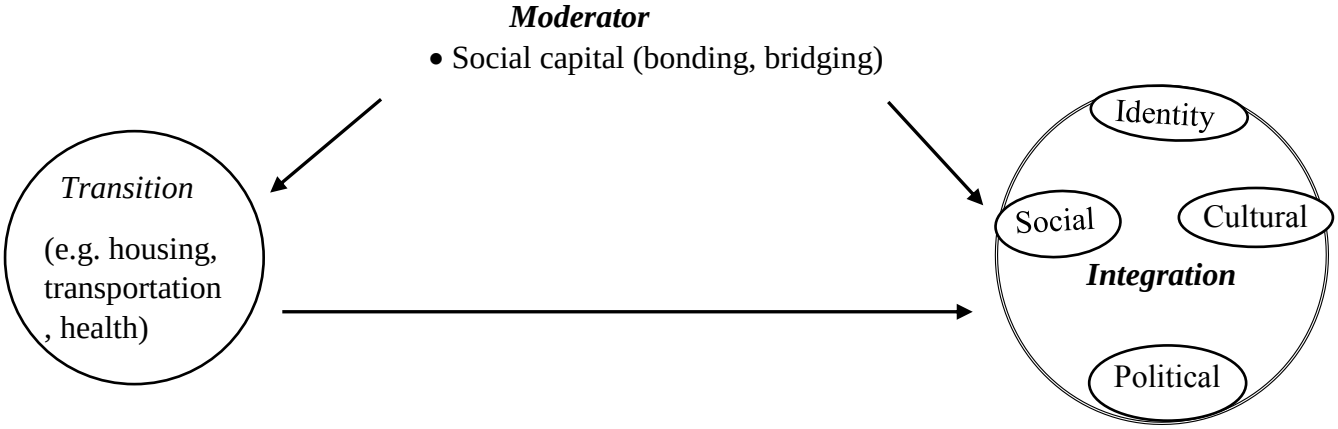
One important contribution of this study is the finding that the social capital not only enables, but it also inhibits refugee integration. Although the bonding social capital created within the ethnic space can enhance the settlement outcomes of refugees, an extreme level of embeddedness within this space has the potential to jeopardize their upward social mobility and sustainable integration into the mainstream space of the host country. The diasporic familial capital that is usually founded on traditional patriarchal norms runs the risk of perpetuating gendered dispositions and inequalities, discouraging refugee women from accessing bridging social capital and mobility opportunities. The over-embeddedness within

the ethnic space is coupled with a lack of investment in bridging activities with the wider society, leading to a risk of possible ethnic enclave and ghettoization.

This does not, however, mean that all forms of community bonding activities are incompatible with integration into the mainstream space of the host society. In recognizing the fluidity of co-ethnic bonds and community, chapter 13 of this study suggests that the relationship between bonding and bridging social capital is complex, multifaceted, and context-dependent. Social bonds can accommodate social bridges in certain circumstances, as some refugees may face constant marginalization even within their ethnic space due to traditional cultural norms and practices. This, in turn, can lead them to the formation of alternative form of bonding social capital beyond their ethnic space, in ways that can build connection with the mainstream society (see chapter 13.2.2.).

Figure 3 illustrates the process through which refugee newcomers negotiate their way to integration into the new society by means of social capital building. I suggest that the social capital obtained through embeddedness in ethnic networks is more crucial for initial transition, whereas the social capital generated through involvement in the mainstream social space is more conductive to wider social integration.

Figure 3. Process of Refugee Integration



14.1.1.3 Language learning within the ethnic space

When taken from the perspective of language learning, the findings indicate that the high level of embeddedness of refugees within their ethnic space can constrain their investment in oral English communication skills. In a community that maintains strong social bonds without some integration with the host society, the expressive investment (i.e., retention of the ethnic language) is deemed more desirable than the instrumental investment (i.e, socialization into the target language). Learners, deeply embedded in their ethnic space and its cultural values, may deliberately choose not to invest in English target language in a context where their ethnic language can be used for social interaction. The investment in the ethnic identity and language maintenance does not give learners access to what Norton Pierce (1995) calls "hitherto unattainable resources" (p. 17), but it rather helps them to retain their cultural resources and prevents them from possible humiliation, awkwardness and non-acceptance within the ethnic space.

Moreover, this study indicates that language learning is a gendered process for refugees who are deeply embedded in traditional patriarchal norms of their ethnic space. The opportunities for the refugee women to invest in the language learning are highly circumscribed, both in the classroom and outside it, by the complex interplay of multiple feminine identities, such as a mother, a housewife and a daughter-in-law. Viewing these insights from the language learning perspective, it can be argued that refugees' ethnic space is a negative interactional space, where their identity of being an English learner is consistently marginalized and rejected.

14.1.1.4 Implications about refugees' ethnic space

Using the insights from the discussions above, I suggest that future research on refugees' social networks (or their ethnic space) should not restrict its focus on one-sided (usually positive) picture of social capital. In order to illuminate the double edged character

of bonding social capital, future directions of research need to specify more precisely the conditions under which family and co-ethnic bonds support and inhibit the development of bridging social capital.

The insights from the study of Bhutanese refugees' social networks lead to a number of pragmatic implications. In light of the roles played by family and ethnic networks in the process of transition to a new environment, this study recommends that refugee settlement policies should give a priority to ensuring that their immediate family and support networks are not broken up when they immigrate to Australia under the offshore Humanitarian Program. The network-mediated chain migration, in which prospective migrants choose a destination for resettlement based on social networks of relatives and friends who are already there, seems to be relevant for offshore refugee resettlement planning and implementation. Furthermore, local refugee service providers should be aware of the informal support networks available to the resettled refugees and work more closely together to bridge the gap between the services needed for initial settlement and those provided by family and ethnic networks. The refugee service providers also need to be aware of prevailing gender inequalities among refugees in accessing mainstream social and educational resources and should take measures to improve women's access to the resources that are intrinsically constrained by familial networks. The implications of these insights for teaching and language education will be discussed in section 14.4.2.

14.1.2 The mainstream space

Chapter 12 of this study examined the language learning experience of Bhutanese refugees, focusing on the ways in which the communicative context embedded in the mainstream social space influences their investment in natural language learning. The findings suggest that the relationship between refugee language learners and their social context of learning is highly complex, ambivalent and multifaceted. In accordance with the

view of language learning as a complex social practice that is socially, politically, culturally and historically constructed (Duff, 2002; Duff, 2007; Norton Pierce, 1995), it has been found that some social contexts of the mainstream space are experienced as inclusionary, while others as exclusionary. Being surrounded by the native English speakers in a naturalistic learning environment does not necessarily translate into opportunities for learners to practise their spoken English in a supportive and meaningful way. Based on this insight, a distinction is proposed between inclusionary and exclusionary context. The learner's investment in English language learning, which is also an investment in their own identity (Norton Pierce, 1995), is highly dependent on access to the English-speaking social networks in the inclusionary context.

This study indicates that the English-speaking community in Australia is not always tolerant and responsive to newcomers' attempts to invest in the identity of being a language learner. Everyday linguistic practices within the mainstream social space across a range of fields such as the church, neighbourhood, hospital and shopping malls can be inclusionary or exclusionary, based on whether the learners' attempts to speak English are reinforced or undermined at a given time and space. The inclusionary context refers to creating a welcoming and supportive environment where learners feel comfortable to interact and participate in the negotiation of meaning with the native English speakers. In such a context, the relationships between the learners and the native English speakers are usually characterized by multiplex ties – ties that are highly homophilous, reciprocal, intimate and likely to prompt multiple dimensions of interaction. Conversely, in the exclusionary social context – which is usually marked by racism, power disparity, hostility, intolerance and impatience – the opportunities for enculturation and language socialization are heavily circumscribed. Adult refugees, as English learners, are likely to deliberately conceal their

investment in English in a social context where they anticipate that revealing their learner identity can result in embarrassment, rejection, discomfort and marginalization.

The inclusionary/exclusionary dichotomy, as proposed above, can be extended to explain the context dependent nature of refugee integration process as well. Viewing integration as a bi-directional process, the findings of this study demonstrate that refugee integration in Australia is heavily influenced by the immediate socio-cultural environment of the host society (see chapter 13.5). Access to inclusionary social context – which is created by mutual trust relations and the openness of the host community – can minimize culture shock, build a sense of inclusion, generate bridging social capital and lead to sustainable integration. For many Bhutanese Christian refugees, the Brighton church functioned as an inclusive social space, both from the language learning and the integration perspectives. In contrast, the refugees who feel socially, culturally and linguistically excluded from many of the other mainstream social spaces of their host society (such as neighbourhood) are likely to intensify their engagement in transnational and ethnic activities in a way that can eventually lead to disintegration and ethnic ghettoization.

14.1.3 The pedagogical space

In light of the insights discussed in the previous sections of this chapter and in chapter 12, I will now put forward some important implications for teaching practices in the AMEP classrooms. The two following subsections are, respectively, devoted to highlighting the main discussion points of (1) the need for accommodating students' perceptions of teaching in the pedagogical space and (2) the role of pedagogical space in mediating between ethnic and mainstream space.

14.1.3.1 Accommodating students' perceptions of teaching

Chapter 12 of this study suggests that the adult refugee students entering AMEP bring with them different dispositions and perceptions related to teaching and learning that are

influenced by their pre-migration experiences, the culture of origin and the context of past education. These dispositions (or habitus) provide the primary basis for the way they approach their learning of English and thus influence their agency and identity as learners. Their reluctance to participate in a Western-style learning context, such as a reticence to speak assertively in front of the class, does not necessarily connote lack of motivation but rather cultural, gender and ethnic impediments. This reluctance in learning can be exacerbated by the discrepancy between what they perceive as the quality of teaching and what they are actually exposed to in the class. Students with previous experience of a well-regulated learning environment may struggle to adapt to the new teaching approaches (such as self-regulated or cooperative learning) that are aimed at promoting active engagement and self-direction. They may perceive teachers using self-regulated learning strategies as lacking sufficient authority and unproductive to their learning.

On the other hand, teachers who bring their own perceptions of what constitutes good classroom practice, with varying degrees of mismatch, might regard students' reluctance as a sign of disengagement and abdication of responsibilities as learners. In this respect, the pedagogical space for adult refugee language learners has been found to be a site of contestation, mismatch, tension and diversity.

On the basis of the empirical findings, I suggest that the pedagogical space, when used strategically, can serve as a site of negotiation and accommodation of these conflicts and mismatches. Rather than taking any one teaching approach for granted, teachers in such multicultural settings are recommended to adopt a hybridity of approaches and methods in ways that bridge the differences between their own and their students' perceptions of teaching quality. One major contribution of this study is the finding that adult refugee students are more likely to engage in the tasks expected of them if their perceptions of quality teaching cohere with the teaching approach in which they are exposed to. As such, teachers

should accommodate their teaching behaviour in light of students' previous learning experiences and their preferred style of learning. In this sense, the pedagogical space within the AMEP can be conceived as a mediating site for creating a Third Space (Bhabha, 1990) that can negotiate between teachers' and students' perceptions, experiences and cultures related to teaching and learning practices.

For quieter students who find it difficult to participate spontaneously, teachers should cultivate their confidence and ability in autonomous learning by using more scaffolded tasks initially and then gradually train them in the skills and knowledge they need in order to take control of their own learning. Cooperative learning such as a group or pair work can be implemented more effectively to the students who are unfamiliar to these techniques by making the learning outcomes explicit, demonstrating how these outcomes can be achieved, monitoring their engagement more closely and giving the appropriate feedback. Teacher regulation of students' learning behaviour, in accordance with their previous experience and teaching perceptions, does not necessarily mean to position them as passive objects, but rather to invite them to leave their zones of comfort, overcome their cultural reticence and engage them strategically in the culture of active participation and learning. Such accommodation of students' previous experience of learning to the pedagogical space will help them make sense of what is happening in their classroom and immerse themselves gradually in the new learning culture. Once students develop a sufficient degree of confidence to engage spontaneously in the classroom discussion, teachers should progressively direct them to activities that require them to assume greater responsibility for the management of their own learning. In this sense, educating refugee students on the new culture and practices of teaching and learning is a lengthy process involving negotiation and accommodation between teachers and their students.

14.1.3.2 Mediating between ethnic and mainstream space

For immigrant and refugee language learners in Australia, the AMEP site can function as a third space (Bhabha, 1990) – a space in between students' own ethnic community and the English-speaking community. In this space, refugees can engage in negotiation and mediation across cultural difference to construct a new type of hybrid identity and foster their integration as being a part of the wider Australian society. By linking the concept of hybridity to the third space, Bhabha argues that "the process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and recognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation" (p. 211). This third space can provide the opportunity for students to bring their outside social experience into the classroom, to negotiate their ambivalent positions within their L1 community and to navigate their way successfully through the appropriation of resources.

The pedagogical space within the AMEP should aim to sensitize and engage students on issues of race, gender, ethnicity and power, in recognition of their influence on students' identities and investment in language learning in everyday practices. If the aim of AMEP instruction is to facilitate the integration of refugees into the multicultural environment of Australia, then the pedagogy it embodied should incorporate a wide variety of simulation scenarios – native, non-native and co-ethnic – enabling students to critically examine the impact of different types of identity they portray and to negotiate their identities according to social constraints. Therefore, the AMEP pedagogy needs to move beyond the idealized and static image of the host society in order to incorporate the social realities faced by students, including racism, gender inequality, ethnic identity and communication difficulties. For example, a thematic unit focusing on "comprehending and giving information" (NSW AMES, 2013, p. 11) – which is one of the competencies underlying CSWE curriculum – should include tasks that engage students not only in learning practical skills such as how to

ask for and understand a doctor's instructions in the hospital, but also in reflecting critically on their experience with the hospital staff as an immigrant (or a refugee) language learner. In this respect, the role of the AMEP teacher is to provide the necessary resources, information and support the students need in order to maximize their investment in learning English outside the classroom.

Dealt with in this way, this third space may involve a hybrid of formal, co-ethnic, familial and natural contexts of language learning. The role-play activities in which students take on a variety of social roles (such as an antagonistic neighbour, a supportive neighbour, an Anglo-Australian boss, an ethnic co-worker and a non-ethnic female classmate) could give them the opportunity to reflect on how and why they perform their identities in a given social context and how these identities in turn influence their investment in English. The role-play tasks reflecting gender role reversals – in which wives, for example, deal with the real-estate agent while their husbands prepare meals at home – invite students to critically examine the effect of gender identity reconstruction on language learning.

Furthermore, the AMEP classroom, as a multicultural learning space, can serve as a means of building students' social networks in a way that maximizes opportunities for oral English practice outside the classroom. In this respect, teachers need to engage students in group projects that require social interactions among students of different ethnic and gender backgrounds, not just inside the classroom but also outside it such as through online social media. Participation in such social networks beyond the classroom walls has been found to be beneficial for newcomer refugees, not only for their English language practice after class but also for serving as a source of social capital in the form of information and advice.

This study highlights the importance of AMEP pedagogy that provides students access to a range of linguistic and cultural practices embedded in everyday social practices of the English-speaking community. As such, practices in the classroom should be reflective of

practices outside the classroom, so the students can transfer skills learned in class to meet the linguistic and functional demands of the situations where they intend to invest in English communication on a day-to-day basis. The students in this study were willing to invest their time and effort in classroom learning in the expectation that this would enable them to successfully interact and negotiate meaning with the native English speakers across different contexts, including hospital, workplace, shopping center and neighbourhood. However, they often felt marginalized and excluded by the native speakers in those contexts, mainly due to their lack of legitimate competence in the technical and colloquial variety of English. This indicates that what teachers perceive as authentic language material is not necessarily authentic to students in their social environment. During the initial stage of their transition to the host society, these students need more input and exposure to English spoken in the street, in stores or on the bus rather than English used for academic purposes (such as grammar and structure). Although it is unrealistic to expect that different varieties of English used in native speaker communities (such as workplace English, colloquial English, regional accents) can be incorporated into the 510 hours of the AMEP curriculum, it is reasonable to suggest that the ultimate goal of the curriculum should be to enable students to deal with situations where they often feel marginalized, and therefore to encourage them to continue their investment in English beyond the classroom.

This suggests that the teacher needs to gain a deeper understanding of their students – their social experiences and their real learning needs – so that the curriculum he/she delivers becomes more relevant and authentic to the students. The language placement test used for assigning students to the appropriate level of AMEP instruction may not be sufficient to gain a broader picture of students' social experiences outside the classroom. It is thus important for the teacher to develop a continuous assessment strategy to collect information of their students. For instance, the conduct of ethnographic field work may provide information about

language learning opportunities the students have in different contexts, including family, ethnic community, workplace, hospital and stores. The instructional tasks that require students to reflect on their real-life experiences – such as, describe a situation where you felt most challenged (or inspired) to speak English – can serve as an important source of information about students' learning needs.

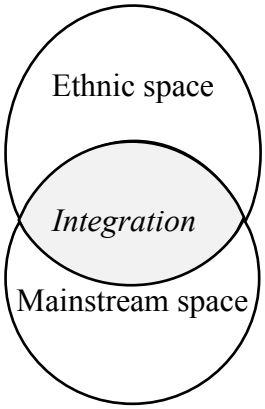
14.1.4 What is integration?

In the chapter 13 of this study, I examined the subjective meaning of integration by exploring various social and cultural contexts in which its meaning was rooted. In contrast to the previous studies approaching the concept of integration using the top-down approach (Ager & Strang, 2008; Australian Survey Research Group, 2011), the findings of this study suggest that what it means to be integrated into the Australian society is complex, ambivalent, ambiguous and context dependent. One important contribution of this study is that it shows that, in order to understand refugee integration more fully, it is not sufficient to account only for the pre-determined set of objective measures (such as housing, employment, health, education and legal rights) without considering the way in which integration is actualized in everyday experience. The way refugees approach their integration and the way it is structured in everyday practice can be influenced by a variety of internal and external factors such as: varying types and degrees of ethnic and cultural embeddedness, transnational connections, linguistic and cultural capitals they possess, host society context, the actual motivation for their migration to Australia and the aspirations they have for them in a new country. For instance, for transnational Bhutanese, integration is concerned primarily with constructing dual accounts of their lives, which is grounded not only within the zone of 'here and now', but more profoundly in the 'there and then' zone through traditional culture, social bonds and practices. Similarly, contrary to the prevailing view that the retention of ethnic culture and solidarity impedes integration, many Christian Bhutanese involved in this study were found

to draw on their traditional cultural and community repertoires to negotiate their integration into the mainstream space of the Brighton Australian church.

Based on the insights from the previous discussions, I wish to suggest that integration is constituted and shaped by the dialectical interplay of different dimensions of everyday life. It is primarily a process of contestation and negotiation between different values, identities and practices embedded in ethnic and mainstream social space. The way I conceive integration, based on my empirical study, is that it resembles Bhabha's (1990) notion of third space and incorporates a hybridity of cultural identifications and experiences. As figure 4 shows, it is a hybrid activity that bridges the cultural and social spaces of both home and host countries.

Figure 4. Mode of Integration



For successful integration into the multicultural environment of Australia, refugees need to draw on resources and information from a variety of sources and communities rather than from a single source and/or space. In this respect, integration is a dynamic process. Refugees can initially rely more on ethnic-specific resources to secure instrumental and emotional support, and then gradually they can shift their attention to resources outside of their ethnic space so as to foster bridging social capital formation, communicative language practice and wider social integration. In this way, refugees can construct their sense of being

integrated by developing a hybrid identity, an identity that ties them to both ethnic and Australian cultures and identities.

14.2 An Integrative Model

Figure 2 presents the model of 'spaces for language learning and integration'. The model has a potential of wider applicability because of two reasons. First, the model is based on the exploration of three major social spaces in which everyday language learning and integration for refugees are to take place: ethnic community, migrant English classroom and host society. Second, the model is interdisciplinary and is informed by the results of a wide range of literature from across disciplines such as language acquisition, social capital, acculturation and adult learning.

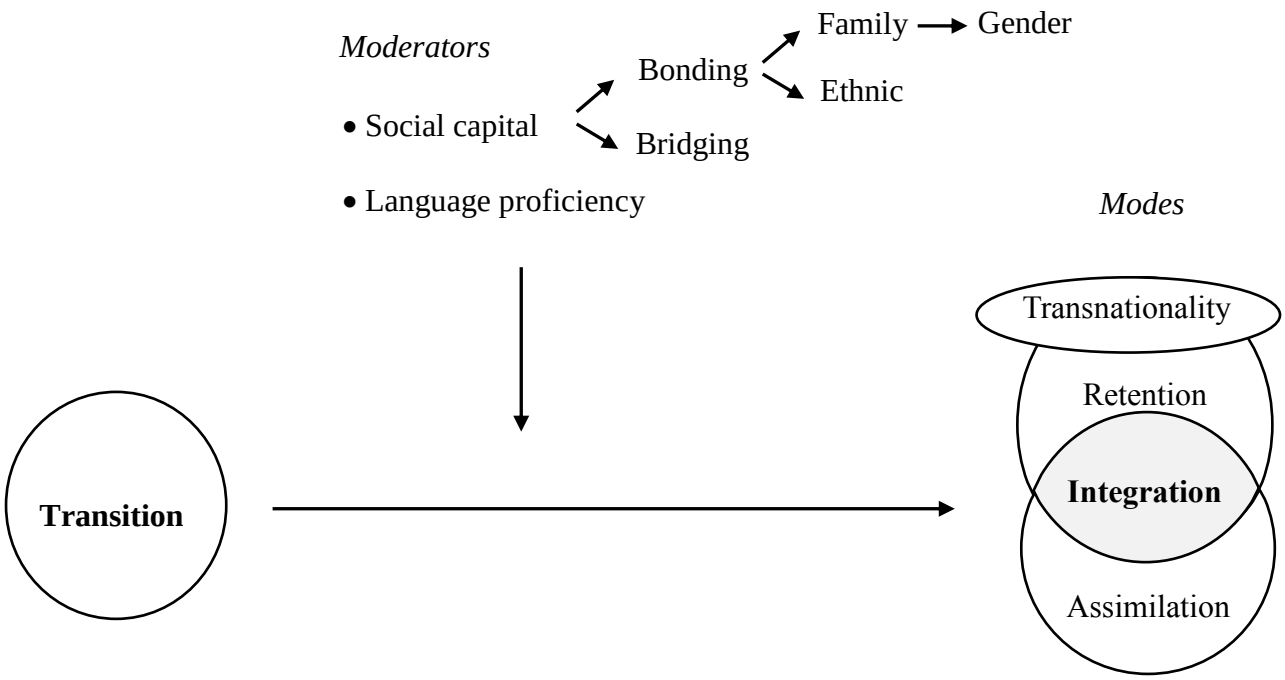
In the model, I have treated language learning and integration as an interdependent and simultaneous process. The two facets of acculturation can go together and are influenced in a situated fashion by the complex interplay of various social and cultural factors. Some of these factors are inherent in the ethnic space (e.g. co-ethnic networks, gender), some in the pedagogical space (e.g. teaching approach, language input) and others in the host community space (e.g. cross-ethnic networks, inclusionary/exclusionary context). In this respect, the model is holistic and comprehensive in its scope.

As indicated in the model, three factors are shown as key determinants of language learning outcomes in the pedagogical space: teaching approach, relevance of classroom-language input for learners and social networks. The key argument in this model is that adult learners are less likely to make investment of their time and efforts in contexts where: (a) they believe that the language program they undertake does not satisfy their immediate integration-related language needs, (b) their perceptions of quality teaching are mismatched with the teaching approach to which they are exposed.

Social networks can operate as facilitators or constraints depending on the type of networks refugees create and use. The cross-ethnic networks, such as the ones created within the host community space (e.g. church), maximize social contact with the target language speakers, which in turn promotes target language acquisition. So, for refugees, the investment in language learning is directly proportional to the extent to which they have access to cross-ethnic networks within their host community space. On the contrary, the investment in language learning is inversely proportional to the presence of co-ethnic networks. That is to say, the greater the co-ethnic networks that exist among refugees, the less likely they are to invest in language learning.

In Figure 3, I have illustrated the process by which refugees navigate their way to integration into the host society by means of social capital building. In this model, I have outlined the roles that the two forms of social capital play in the integration process. They include bonding capital (i.e. family and ethnic community) and bridging capital (i.e. host society). Similarly, in Figure 4, I have shown how everyday integration is constituted and shaped by the dialectical interplay of two different modes of acculturation: retention (ethnic) and assimilation (host society). I now attempt a synthesis of the elements of the two models in order to reach to a more complete and cohesive picture of integration. The synthesized model incorporates both the factors which have been shown to be significant in influencing the process of integration and the effects that these factors have upon the mode of integration. Figure 5 presents the synthesized model.

Figure 5. Integrative Model



As shown in Figure 5, I consider social capital to be an important moderating factor for refugees negotiating through transition to successful integration. It can influence both the outcome and the process of integration. The support and resources embedded in the bonding social capital are both the lubricant and the glue – that is, they facilitate the attainment of the functional measures of integration but they hold the ethnic group together in a way that can lead to a ghetto situation. To clarify this further, the accessibility of bonding social capital has a positive association with the short-term integration outcomes such as access to housing, transportation, government services and cultural information. But a high level of bonding social capital may lead to a negative effect in the long run, resulting in separation and withdrawal from the wider host society. Therefore, bonding social capital is a double-edged sword in its influence on the process and the outcome of integration.

Another form of bonding social capital is embedded in the networks of family unit, which is not always positive for social mobility and equality of opportunity. Its 'glue' character has the potential to hold and perpetuate norms that are patriarchal and

discriminatory. I see gender as an important factor when considering the effects of familial capital on the refugee integration process. Social capital interacts with gender to determine who in the family unit has access to social resources beyond the boundary of the family unit. The family bonds grounded in the patriarchal norms lead to gender inequality, confining women mostly to the domestic sphere and allowing men greater access to resources for social, linguistic and labour-market integration. Therefore, the familial capital cuts both ways in terms of promoting or inhibiting the integration of refugees.

Another important feature of this model is its ability to encompass 'retention' and 'assimilation' as constituents of integration. In this view, everyday practices of integration lie along a vertical continuum from host-culture assimilation at the bottom to ethnic retention at the top. Three factors play a prominent role in determining the extent to which refugees are integrated into their host society: accessibility of social capital, transnationality and target language proficiency and education. A high volume of bonding social capital leads to a greater extent of ethnic retention, whereas a high volume of bridging social capital leads to a greater extent of host-culture assimilation. Bridging social capital is available in the host-community space that is characterized by trust, mutual adjustment, respect and solidarity.

Similarly, I consider transnationality as an unavoidable element that shapes the extent and quality of integration into the local community. Transnationality is concerned with constructing dual accounts of lives, which is grounded not only within the zone of host community but more profoundly in the zone of community of origin. I postulate that absolute assimilation is almost impossibile for 21st-century refugees who live in super-diverse and global community contexts. As such, everyday practices of integration constitutes elements that are neither fully assimilationist nor fully retentionist, but rather a hybrid of both communities and cultures.

The third element, the ability to use the host country language, has a greater influence perhaps than any other variables (such as citizenship and voting rights) on the construction and legitimization of integrated identity. The effective acquisition of host-country language is closely associated with the development of integrated identity, while the lack of this ability contributes to the feelings of cultural outsiderness and the intensification of ethnic retention.

14.3 Limitations of the Study

In this section, I will discuss the limitations of the study. As much as I consider my insider-outsider status in relation to the research participants a strength, I also consider it as a limitation for the study. My insider status by means of shared linguistic and cultural background gave me easy access to participants' lived experiences. My language background allowed the participants to feel free to speak their native language. It also made it easier to establish rapport during field work. I was familiar in some ways with the patterns of life of the community even before the field work began. I knew that many Hindu Bhutanese families would meet at each other's homes for weekly worship services. I knew that there was factionalism within the Bhutanese community based upon the boundaries of caste, religion and culture. Some members of the community identified me as a community member, a friend or an acquaintance.

I acknowledge that this familiarity could be a conflict of interest in some instances. My personal and professional background and my familiarity with the community played a major role in how I approached this study, how I formulated the research questions and how the fieldwork was organized. Neutrality was sought by minimizing researcher bias, but bias was not completely eliminated. Generally I attempted to interview those who I thought might have experienced the issues discussed in the study.

I constantly found myself switching back and forth between my insider and outsider identities. I positioned myself as a non-participant when I undertook observations in the

classrooms. But I was a complete participant when I attended their cultural events and festivals. This required constant efforts so as to keep a balance between the two conflicting identities and retain a trustable relationship with the participants. When they identified me as a member of their group rather than a researcher, this insider status might have influenced the stories they shared with me. For example, one respondent started asking me about my political stance on Bhutanese Government's 'ethnic cleansing policy' when he knew that I had spent several years working with Bhutanese refugees in the camps of Nepal. My previous familiarity might have also blinded me from seeing the cultural patterns of the community that were part of my own taken-for-granted realm. For example, from the very initial stage of the study, I had known that many former non-Christian Bhutanese, especially those from the so-called lower social caste background, chose to convert to Christianity after arriving in Australia and got involved in the Australian Christian group. However, it took several weeks for me to realize that there was something to be learned from the study of what social and cultural factors might have led those lower social-caste Bhutanese to change their religion.

In addition to the limitation resulted from my insider-outsider status, the study was limited to one refugee community from one geographical region in Australia. Many members had a long history of living on the borderlands of refugee camps and negotiating new dimensions of social life and community in Australia. I must acknowledge that each refugee's experience is unique. Each refugee trajectory has its own set of characteristics. Each refugee has unique historical, social, cultural, political and educational backgrounds and the integration experience in a new society is unique for each individual. As such, the experiences and narratives presented in this study may not fully reflect the experiences of other resettled refugees from other diasporic communities. Drawing any firm conclusions or formal inference from this single ethnographic case is beyond the scope of this study.

14.4 Generalizability

Eisner (1991) argues that in qualitative analysis generalization even from a single case is possible through the process of attribute analysis and pattern matching. The process of generalizing, he suggests, requires the reader to determine "whether the research findings fit the situation in which they work" (p. 204). Yet, the conclusions drawn from the qualitative analyses may be more tentative than they could be if based on formal inference. Although generalization is not the main focus of this study, it is reasonable to offer some speculations about other refugee groups in Australia and globally, based on pattern matching and attribute analysis.

I speculate that the refugees who are resettled in a community characterized by low overall volume of bridging social capital are less likely to be integrated into the culture and social structure of that community. Such a community is generally not egalitarian and open to newcomers and is usually characterized by high levels of racism, power disparity, intolerance and hostility. Furthermore, the refugees who live in a community that generates high overall volume of bonding social capital are more likely to remain within the comfort zone of an ethnic enclave and are less likely to be integrated into the local culture and community. It can also be speculated that refugees who have access to a high volume of bonding social capital may, however, attain a greater extent of functional and emotional integration than those who do not have such access.

The speculation can also be made that the refugees coming from traditional patriarchal societies are more likely to retain the norms that perpetuate gender inequality and discrimination. The refugee women from such cultures and communities may have less potential than their male counterparts to integrate into the linguistic and social structures of the host community. Moreover, I speculate that the refugees who are unable to acquire the

target language fully (such as elderly people) may be less connected to the social and cultural frames of the host community and are thus more likely to construct a ‘separated’ identity.

14.5 Does the Models have Implications for European Migration?

In this section, I am considering most radically different refugee groups to see whether the models can be applied to other groups globally. The ‘language learning’ and ‘integration’ models proposed in Figure 2 and Figure 5 are based on the exploration of the experiences of the Bhutanese community in Launceston. Given the potential of ethnography to link local experiences with broader social and global processes, the models are expected to offer some valuable insights into understanding the refugee issues within national and international contexts. I speculate that the models will help shed some light on interpreting contemporary refugee challenges in the European context. More specifically, the models are expected to offer insights into refugee issues associated with gender, culture, transnationality, community, social bonds and language education. Below I will discuss some examples which show how the models may help understand contemporary refugee issues.

The recent European refugee crisis has attracted much of the attention of current public and political discourse, producing contradictory views regarding issues facing refugees. The massive inflows of Syrians and Afghans seeking asylum in Europe has been positioned as problematic, with some deeming this as a threat to cultural and social integrity (Holmes & Castaneda, 2016). Suspicion has been increasingly raised regarding their ability to integrate into European values and culture. One of the most disputed topics on asylum and migration in Europe has been the assessment of whether these new cohorts are integrating well. However, I speculate that the policy responses to the so-called European refugee crisis have not effectively addressed some pressing issues associated with the refugee integration process.

Tension arises when a gap exists between how government views integration in policy and how it actually looks like in the everyday experience of refugees. The government may set policy in one way, but refugees may experience it in another way. Existing policy work in Europe and other immigration countries including Australia has focussed extensively on identifying objective indicators of integration (Phillimore, 2012), rather than factors that can impact the integration process. The objective indicators such as acquisition of a new language, securing employment, housing and citizenship rights are of greatest interest, as progress in such a manner can be quantified. As such, programs and services are specifically tailored to address these immediate settlement needs of refugees.

However, based on my ethnographic evidence, I speculate that refugee integration is concerned with a much broader range of issues beyond simplistic functional indicators. As shown in Figure 5, access to these functional indicators may be significantly influenced by issues of gender, culture, social bonds/capital, transnationality and community. As detailed in Chapter 10, the refugee women, for example, who are deeply invested in traditional patriarchal norms may find it more difficult than their male counterparts to re-negotiate their gender relations in order to access the social resources (e.g. language education) pre-requisite for their wider social integration. This study demonstrates a clear need for policy makers and practitioners to take account of and bring more clarity on what effect transnationality, gender, culture, community and social capital may have on functional integration of these new waves of refugees in Europe and other immigrant nations.

In December 2015, German Chancellor Angela Merkel declared in her speech that multiculturalism in Germany "remains a lie", telling immigrants that they "must obey our laws, values and traditions" (Reuters, 2015). Many observers interpreted Merkel's comment as her clear admission that the recent cohorts of refugees are not assimilating successfully into German culture and society. Merkel's statement can also, however, be interpreted as a

policy deafness concerning the realities of everyday transnationalism that refugees may engage in and the tension this transnational engagement creates between their local integration and cross-border socio-cultural investment. Looking at the ethnographic evidence from the Bhutanese refugees in Launceston, it may be inferred that the discourse of immigration and everyday integration is no longer confined to a process of leaving behind one's original culture and social connections to be replaced with a new one. An important contribution of this study is the demonstration of the how and why refugees of the 21st century may not be socially and culturally bound to a single geographical space. Through the investigation of everyday experiences of resettled Bhutanese families, I have found that refugees can develop and negotiate multiple belongings, affiliations and sense of home by actively engaging in social, cultural and religious practices of their country of origin, while simultaneously adapting to their new host country. A certain level of transnational involvement may be of primary urgency for the resettled families to rebuild their familial and ethnic connections that has been previously disrupted due to war and this may in fact assist integration by offering emotional and cultural security.

Merkel's statement also reflects a growing interest in Europe for a shift away from multicultural policy towards cultural assimilation in the wake of increasing fear that strong bonding of refugees within their own ethnic or religious communities may diminish the strength of social cohesion and national unity. However, I found no empirical evidence to support the assumption that the maintenance of ethnic bonds limits integration into wider social and civic life. The findings from this study reveal that the establishment of ethnic community bonds can in fact bring significant benefits contributing towards instrumental, emotional and cultural integration of refugees. As shown in the proposed 'integration model' (see Figure 5), the resources and information embedded in ethnic bonding capital can function as a social lubricant for newly-arrived families, facilitating their transition towards

settlement into a new society. The policy and practice implications of the insights gained from the analysis of ethnic bonding capital is of critical importance for the effectiveness of refugee resettlement programs. I suggest that there are clear benefits when policymakers and refugee support organizations pay due attention as to how best support new refugee families by employing already-settled families (ethnic bonding capital) to work with Government and new-arrivals to help navigate social support systems.

Another important contribution of this study lies in its rich empirical accounts that allows insights to challenge the conventional ways of looking at refugee integration solely through the lens of ethnicity or country of origin. In November 2016, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton said that it was a "mistake" to bring some refugee cohorts to Australia. His controversial statement was seen by many as a reference to Sudanese and Lebanese-Muslim refugees who were deemed to be less successful in integrating to Australian society than refugees coming from other regions of the world. However, his statement did not take into account the many factors (as shown in Figure 5) that are intertwined in the refugee integration process. Based on the findings from this study, I argue that integration for refugees is highly subjective, personal and embedded within context. Challenges faced by refugees can only be addressed if they are treated as distinct individuals rather than as a homogenous ethnic group requiring the same support systems. Drawing on the data from my ethnographic engagement with Hindu and Christian Bhutanese, it is possible to infer that a community in a diasporic context is fluid, dynamic and multidimensional rather than a fixed entity with a well-defined set of ethnic boundary (e.g. Lebanese, Bhutanese and Sudanese). Its boundary can be created and recreated by people in interaction through the formation of bonding and bridging social capital. The refugee experience can be considered neither fully integrated (i.e. assimilation) nor completely segregated. Hence, as shown in Figure 5, integration is enacted in everyday subjective experiences of refugees through hybrid and

complex contestation process between pre-existing and emerging communities, cultures and identities.

The other major contribution of this thesis, as detailed from Chapter 10 to Chapter 12, is the exploration of issues and tensions surrounding language learning of refugees in relation to larger questions of integration, culture, gender, social capital and pedagogical processes. The implications of the proposed 'language learning and integration' model (see Figure 2) for policy making are profound because it provides a framework for understanding the ways in which language learning interacts with social integration and the ways in which these two processes are connected to and influenced by issues of gender, ethnicity, context, culture, social networks and identity. One important aspect of its implication for curriculum development and instruction is that it provides an initial grounding for explorations of how best to tailor pedagogical processes to sensitize and engage adult refugee students on issues of autonomy, gender, culture, ethnicity and social capital, in recognition of their influences on their identities and investment in language learning in everyday social practices (see Section 14.4 for details).

In addition, the model demonstrates that the process of language learning and integration for refugees is situated and shaped by the interplay of different, interacting social spaces – ethnic space, host community and migrant English classroom. The policy implications of findings related to host community space as a site for language learning (e.g. church group) are of real importance. The empirical evidence drawn from the exploration of church and other everyday social sites makes a strong case for complementing the AMEP by alternative language education programmes such as volunteer teaching and peer-to-peer mentoring to cater for the specific language needs of refugees who are less committed to formal education.

14.6 Directions for Future Study

This study can serve as a foundation for future investigation of issues related to gender dynamics, transnationality, cultural identity, community and social capital in relation to larger questions of settlement, language learning and integration of refugees. The proposed models of 'language learning' and 'integration' (Figure 2 and Figure 5) stimulate future research to test their wider utility and explanatory potential. These models are not meant to be prescriptive but can prompt further studies on some of these most challenging aspects of contemporary refugee life. In terms of methodological orientation, this study opens up new ground for future studies of refugee integration from a 'bottom-up approach', which means taking account of how integration is actualized in the everyday experience of refugees rather than adhering to theoretical or prescriptive accounts to assess whether refugees fulfil the requirements of objective markers of integration. This study also demonstrates the value of an interdisciplinary orientation to future research investigating the interconnection of factors impacting refugee experiences.

14.6.1 Qualitative study

To estimate their generalization capability and ensure their wider applicability, the proposed models of 'language learning' and 'integration' (Figure 2 and Figure 5) should be tested in other ethnographic communities with more diverse social, ethnic and historical backgrounds. It is advisable to apply these models to study the acculturation issues encountered by other refugee communities which are often portrayed in media and political discourse as less successful in integration.

For example, future research could examine the integration issues of the Sudanese refugee community in light of the models proposed in this study. In the last ten years, there has been a large number of negative headlines in the Australian local and national press about the integration challenges of Sudanese refugees, including crime among Sudanese youth, race

based gangs and assault and conflict within Sudanese families. This resulted in reducing the intake from the Africa region from around 70 per cent in 2007 to 30 per cent two years later. In 2007, the former Australian Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews said that the refugee groups from Africa, particularly those from Sudanese background, "don't seem to be settling and adjusting into the Australian way of life" (The Age, 2007). This suggests that the Sudanese refugees are facing greater difficulties in integration than other communities in Australia, such as the Bhutanese. As such, future research that explores a less integrated community, such as Sudanese, can add value to the proposed models (as shown in Figure 2 and Figure 5) by providing important insights into factors contributing to unsuccessful integration outcomes. In particular, future research could investigate if, and to what extent, the moderators introduced in the models (such as gender dynamics, transnationality, cultural identity, community and social capital) contribute to the disintegration (or separation) of a refugee community.

To explore the influence of various factors proposed in the models on the disintegration of a refugee community, it would be advisable for future research to conduct an ethnographic fieldwork in an area that is ethnically concentrated. For example, in the case of the Sudanese community, one of the potential field work sites could be Blacktown which is in the State of New South Wales. For several decades, Blacktown has been a destination for refugees from many parts of the world (Afghanistan, Iraq, Liberia, Iran and Sierra Leone) and is home to a large refugee population from Sudan. The Sudanese refugees represented over half of the total refugee population resettled in Blacktown in the years between 2003 and 2008 (NSW Migration Heritage Centre, 2011). The already established Sudanese community played a crucial role for the immigration of many new Sudanese cohorts into Blacktown. Great cultural and linguistic diversity exists even within the Sudanese community in

Blacktown because many were born elsewhere such as Khartoum, Egypt, Kenya and Uganda due to the ongoing civil war in Sudan.

In addition, it would be important to conduct a similar ethnographic study of newly resettled refugee community in Australia (such as Syrians and Iraqis) in relation to the influences of different socio-cultural factors (proposed in the models) on the processes of integration and separation (e.g. ethnic ghetto). With the study of a relatively new refugee community, it would be interesting to examine how bonding and bridging social capital influences the process of transition and sustainable integration. For example, an ethnographic study of Syrian refugees living in Fairfield, a major resettlement site for refugees in the State of New South Wales, can provide further insight into the positive and negative influences of family and ethnic networks on different stages (i.e. transition and integration) of acculturation of refugees. Starting from November 2015, Fairfield has become the largest resettlement site for Syrian refugees in Australia. About 4,000 Syrian refugees have been resettled so far in this metropolitan region. Many times it has been reported in news that Fairfield is struggling to settle refugees after a huge influx of Syrian arrivals (ABC News, 2017). In contrast to Sudanese refugees, Syrians are new arrivals and are a new and emerging ethnic community in Australia. Therefore, future research might explore the functional integration (e.g. housing, transportation, access to government services, language acquisition) of this emerging community through the eyes of family, ethnic and host community networks. In this way, the qualitative study of multiple ethnographic communities with distinct characteristics will allow cross-case comparison and offer further insight into the proposed models of language learning and integration.

14.6.2 Quantitative study

I propose the models of language learning and integration (as shown in Figure 2 and Figure 5, respectively) be tested using quantitative measures as well. The reason for this is to

get a further validation of the models and see their applicability across wider populations. A large-scale quantitative study would offer an additional and perhaps a more profound basis to draw formal inferences about refugees facing integration issues globally. I suggest a need for future quantitative research in which the models can be tested with different migrant and refugee groups in Australia.

Future researchers could develop a questionnaire on variables including views on gender roles, transnationality, culture, social capital, family and community to systematically assess their interrelationships and determine their effects on refugee integration. Kember and Leung (2008) advocated for the design of such questionnaires to be grounded in qualitative research. They argued that designing a questionnaire from qualitative research is the most rigorous approach to establishing construct validity. This approach to establishing validity has a naturalistic base. In this respect, the study reported in this thesis offers a form of construct validation in developing an instrument for future quantitative study on refugee integration. Rather than designing a questionnaire based on a prescribed theoretical framework, the constructs can be derived in an open way from the perspectives of refugees. It follows a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down approach. An instrument designed in this manner would reflect an attempt to provide a measure of what constitutes integration for refugees rather than how refugees should be integrated.

To conclude, this study suggests that, for refugees, the process of integration into their host society is not a simple mono-linear transition, but is a complex and ongoing process. The process of integration is influenced and shaped by the interplay of various socio-cultural factors, including social networks, gender, culture, language socialization, transnationality and institutional environment of the host community. This study shows that the resources and information embedded in the networks of family and ethnic community have a positive influence on the short-term integration outcome, but have a negative effect on the wider

social integration of refugees. In addition, this study suggests that for refugees integration is a process of ongoing negotiation between ethnic retention and host-society assimilation and is influenced by the contestation of different cultural values, identities and practices embedded in ethnic and host community space. Building on these insights, this study has developed an eclectic model of language learning and integration of refugees (see Figure 5). Future qualitative and quantitative research in this important field is warranted so as to assess the wider applicability of the proposed model and build greater conceptual clarity on the factors influencing refugee integration.

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Appendix 1 Interview guide for the Bhutanese students in AMEP classes.

Background

1. What do you know about Bhutan? Why did you leave the country?
2. How was your life like in the refugee camp in Nepal?
3. Tell me about your educational experiences in the refugee camp?
4. What are some of the reasons why you decided to come to Australia?
5. How do you compare your life as a refugee in Nepal with your life in Australia?
6. Tell me about your family and roles of each family member in Australia?
7. What do you like most about living in Australia? What do you like least?

English Language Learning

8. What is your current level of English? What is your hope about being a competent English speaker?
9. Draw a network of people with whom you practise your spoken English in everyday life.
10. What are your feelings and experiences about speaking English with the native English speakers?
11. Do you speak English at home and in your community? Why/why not?
12. What do you consider as the main factors that influence your English language learning in the AMEP classroom? Can you explain each of these factors a little more fully?
13. What approaches of teaching will help you learn English better?
14. What types of language learning tasks do you like doing?

Integration

15. Can you describe your social networks in Australia and how they are used for your settlement in everyday life?

16. To what extent do you feel that you are settled in Australia? What made you feel so?
17. In what ways does your English language proficiency influence your integration? Give examples?
18. What does it mean for you to be an Australian?
19. What factors do you think influence your integration in Australia? Can you explain each of these factors a little more fully?
20. How do you practice your religion and culture in your daily life in Australia?
21. What future goals do you have for yourself in this country?

Appendix 2 Ethics approval.

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HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (TASMANIA) NETWORK

UTAS

29 April 2014

Dr Robyn Reaburn
Faculty of Education
Locked Bag 1307

Student Researcher: Subhash Koirala

Sent via email

Dear Dr Reaburn

Re: FULL ETHICS APPLICATION APPROVAL
Ethics Ref: **H0013905 - Language Learning and Social Integration of Adult Bhutanese Refugees: An Ethnographic Study**

We are pleased to advise that the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee approved the above project on 26 April 2014.

This approval constitutes ethical clearance by the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. The decision and authority to commence the associated research may be dependent on factors beyond the remit of the ethics review process. For example, your research may need ethics clearance from other organisations or review by your research governance coordinator or Head of Department. It is your responsibility to find out if the approval of other bodies or authorities is required. It is recommended that the proposed research should not commence until you have satisfied these requirements.

Please note that this approval is for four years and is conditional upon receipt of an annual Progress Report. Ethics approval for this project will lapse if a Progress Report is not submitted.

The following conditions apply to this approval. Failure to abide by these conditions may result in suspension or discontinuation of approval.

1. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval, to ensure the project is conducted as approved by the Ethics Committee, and to notify the Committee if any investigators are added to, or cease involvement with, the project.